From Farm to Form: Improving your Survey & Evaluation Skills

JUNE 20, 2019
Pennsylvania Agricultural History Project

Introduction
Farming has guided Pennsylvania’s economic growth and cultural development and has profoundly shaped the lands and people of the Commonwealth. Road improvement activities, new housing construction, and economic development projects together exert enormous pressure on agricultural lands. Every year the Federal Highways Administration, PennDOT and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission’s Bureau for Historic Preservation (BHP) evaluate hundreds of historic agricultural resources as part of the planning process for transportation projects across the state. Deciding which resources merit historic preservation requires high quality accessible information. In the face of sprawl, multiple initiatives across the state seek to protect historic open space, farmland, and natural historic resources. Heritage tourism and education projects seek reliable Information about rural historic resources for planning and interpretation. The goal of this project was to create a source of information to help inform these planning efforts.

![Image](https://example.com/image.jpg)

Jayne’s Bend Archaeological District Methoany Township, Wyoming County

What is the Project?

Note
This is a static, archived version of the PHMC Pennsylvania Agricultural History Project website which will not be updated. It is a snapshot of the website with minor modifications as it appeared on August 26, 2015.
Pennsylvania Agricultural History Project
Exploring Diverse Landscapes

Learn more about Pennsylvania’s various agricultural regions and rich cultural heritage at http://phmc.info/PaAgHistory
The Pennsylvania Agricultural History Project organizes Pennsylvania’s diverse agricultural experience into 16 regions and tells the story of the people and places that shaped our landscape, and continue to shape our heritage.

**Adams County Fruit Belt**
In 1905 Adams County became PA’s top apple producer, and remains a leader in growing and processing fruit.

**Allegheny Mountains Part-Time & General Farming**
Farming here was often to supplement incomes from lumber, mining, and other industries.

**Central Valleys Diversified Farming**
These narrow valleys featured strong Pennsylvania German influences and an emphasis on grains and livestock.

**Lake Erie Fruits & Vegetables**
The microclimate along Lake Erie’s coast is perfect for growing cherries, grapes, and other fruits and vegetables.

**Lancaster Plain**
This gently rolling lowland plain in Lancaster County has some of the best growing conditions in the US.

**Lehigh County Potatoes**
Potatoes became a primary cash crop in this sub-region between 1910-1960, with over 3 million bushels harvested in 1949.

**Northern Tier Grasslands**
By 1900, many farms in northern PA were focusing on dairy cows, and producing milk to sell to industrial and urban markets.

**Northwestern Woodland, Grassland & Specialized Farming**
A 19th century system that included maple sugar, sheep, and home-based cheese making switched to focus on milk sales by the 20th century.

**Potter County Potato & Cannery Crops**
This sub-region supplemented dairying with potatoes, and later with other vegetables for commercial canning or freezing.

**River Valleys Tobacco**
From 1870-1930, farmers in these three areas along the Susquehanna River or its tributaries added tobacco to their farms’ mix of cash crops.

**Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission**

**Pocono Resort & Anthracite Coal Diversified Farming**
Farms in this region provided foods for coal mining families as well as tourists visiting the Pocono Resorts.

**Pennsylvania DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**Southwestern Pennsylvania Diversified Farming & Sheep Raising**
This hilly region historically led PA production of sheep (and still does), but farms always included other livestock and grains, too.

**Susquehanna Diversified Farming**
Farms here evolved to serve growing local markets in industrial towns like Williamsport.

**York-Adams Diversified Field Crops, Cannery Crops & Livestock**
Between 1885-1940, this region focused on vegetables and fruits for commercial canneries, and poultry.
Using Pennsylvania’s Agricultural Context in the Field and on the Farm: Tips, Tricks, and Updates

May 29, 2019 by Barbara Frederick | 0 comments

The ambitious Pennsylvania Agricultural History Project started in 2001 and took 12 years to finish. The project included the creation of a statewide agricultural context for the National Register evaluation of agricultural properties, entitled “Agricultural Resources of Pennsylvania, 1700-1960, Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF).”

Sixteen agricultural regions were identified based on factors such as product mix, labor and mechanization, tenancy, cultural and ethnicity. Separate contexts, property types, and registration requirements were developed for each of the agricultural regions.

https://pahistoricpreservation.com
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>1875-1905 Origins of the Adams County Fruit Belt</th>
<th>1935- about 1940 Consolidation and Leadership</th>
<th>1940-1956 Specialization and Vertical Integration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Product Mix</td>
<td>Chops, w. heat, corn, oats, potatoes, hay. (pp. 16)</td>
<td>Chops, fruit, many apples, corn, oats, hay, some w. heat, canning crops. (pp. 24-26)</td>
<td>Chops, fruit, many apples but also peaches and cherries. Less corn, hay, and livestock than before</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor System &amp; Mechanization</td>
<td>Family labor. Gender mixed. (pp. 20)</td>
<td>Family, and local wage labor. Mixed mechanization.</td>
<td>Migrant workers (pp. 47-48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Tenure</td>
<td>Mixed tenancy, no single pattern</td>
<td>Line tenancy rates</td>
<td>Masseur company owned farms and tenants them with managers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture and Ethnicity</td>
<td>Varied, some MA Germans, some Irish.</td>
<td>Varied, some MA Germans.</td>
<td>Migrant workers from various backgrounds including the Caribbean and Latin South (African Americans)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration Requirements/Individuals Periods</td>
<td>Form:  House typical of the period and region AND</td>
<td>Form:  House typical of the period and region AND</td>
<td>Form:  House typical of the period and region AND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Changes</td>
<td>Architectural evidence of fruit culture: barn modifications for packing, fruit storage, or buildings for fruit storage; separate packing house, or other housing in support of fruit farming (pp. 20-24)</td>
<td>Architectural evidence of fruit culture: barn modifications for packing, fruit storage, or buildings for fruit storage; separate packing house, or other housing in support of fruit farming (pp. 20-24)</td>
<td>Architectural evidence of fruit culture: barn modifications for packing, fruit storage, or buildings for fruit storage; separate packing house, or other housing in support of fruit farming (pp. 20-24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note: Architectural construction larger in size and scale and located within the historic farmstead to attract from integrity of design (statement of integrity pp. 4)</td>
<td>Note: Architectural construction larger in size and scale and located within the historic farmstead to attract from integrity of design (statement of integrity pp. 4)</td>
<td>Note: Architectural construction larger in size and scale and located within the historic farmstead to attract from integrity of design (statement of integrity pp. 4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm Above AND</td>
<td>Historical evidence of orchard remains and</td>
<td>Historical evidence of orchard remains and</td>
<td>Historical evidence of orchard remains and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note: Farms may retain evidence of labor systems, tenancy, and cultural identity as outlined above.</td>
<td>Note: Farms may retain evidence of labor systems, tenancy, and cultural identity as outlined above.</td>
<td>Note: Farms may retain evidence of labor systems, tenancy, and cultural identity as outlined above.</td>
<td>Note: Farms may retain evidence of labor systems, tenancy, and cultural identity as outlined above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration Requirements: Change over Time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architectural evidence showing the major changes over time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#PreservationHappensHere!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product Mix –</th>
<th>1940-1960 Specialization and Vertical Integration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Review Agricultural Census Data and Historic Aerials. (Historic Aerials apply only to period c. 1930-1960. For guidance in interpreting them, see Researcher’s Guide.)</td>
<td>Crops, fruit, mainly apples but also peaches and cherries. Less corn, hay, and livestock than before.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Review Agricultural Census, Buildings, Site plan, and Historic Aerials.</td>
<td>Migrant workers (pp. 47-48).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor System &amp; Mechanization –</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Review Agricultural Census, Buildings, Site plan, and Historic Aerials.</td>
<td>Migrant workers from various backgrounds, including the Caribbean and US South (African Americans).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Tenure –</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Review 1850, 1880, and 1927 Agricultural Census</td>
<td>Migrant company owned farms and tenanted them with managers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture and Ethnicity –</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document where applicable</td>
<td>Migrant workers from various backgrounds, including the Caribbean and US South (African Americans).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration Requirements/Individual Periods</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmstead:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ House typical of the period and region AND</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ “Architectural evidence of focused apple and other orchard fruit growing” (at least one of packing barn, migrant quarters, roadside stand, cold storage), pages 49-66 (These are newly drafted guidelines because they were omitted in the original context).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmstead Layout:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Retention of historic relationship between buildings Note. Additions/new construction larger in size and scale and located within the historic farmstead detract from integrity of design (Statement of integrity pp. 4).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm, Above AND</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Orchard acreage. (These are newly drafted guidelines because they were omitted in the original context.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Some historically associated acreage remains Note. Farms may retain evidence of labor systems, tenancy, and cultural/ethnicity as outlined above</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Model RSFs for Farms
Model RSFs for Farms

Chart 7. Comparison of Number of Livestock on Valley Run Farm under Elias Detwiler to the Average Newberry Township Farm, 1880.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Horses</th>
<th>Milk Cows</th>
<th>Other Cattle</th>
<th>Swine</th>
<th>Poultry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elias Detwiler</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newberry Township Average Farm</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: USDA 1880
Model RSFs for Farms

Source: USDA 1937
PA State Historic Preservation Office (PA SHPO)

Additional Guidance for Agricultural Resources of Pennsylvania MPDF:
Agricultural Resources of Pennsylvania, c1960-1980: An Era of Specialization and Expanded Amish Presence

Prepared by:
Sally McMurry, Professor Emerita of History
Penn State University

ISSUED May 2019
Figure 2: Pennsylvania farms in 1982 by Standard Industrial Classifications. U.S. Census of Agriculture, Pennsylvania 1982, Table 15.
Essential Questions to Ask

The following key questions should be asked during interviews:

- What were the main agricultural products of the farm after World War II? How did things change in the 1960s, 70s, 80s?

- What changes were made to buildings or landscape features, such as additions, new buildings, removal of old buildings, moving buildings, making contour strips, adding or removing fences, clearing woodlots, etc.? When were these changes made?
Linear Harvest Pattern with visible shocks
(Lancaster County, 9/28/1957)

Corn in shocks, no date.

www.pennpilot.psu.edu/
The 1960-1980 Period
1795 Pine Road, Newville
A Case Study
Evidence of a farm reflecting 1960-1980 dairying trends:

- Conventional stall barn w/nearby milking parlor and milk house
- Free stall barn w/separate milking parlor, holding and feeding areas, bulk milk tank
- Storage: bedding, hay, equipment
- Silage storage and Grain bins
- Calf, heifer, dry cow segregation
- And?
When is a barn just a barn?
Evaluating Barns for National Register Eligibility
Question #7: From a construction standpoint, is a barn with hewn timbers more important than one with sawn timbers?

Response A: No, not at all.

Response B: Yes. There, I said it.
A 19th-Century Bucks County Workbook

Contemporary drawings of 19th-century barn framing, such as the typical Pennsylvania barn in Fig. 1, are rare. Joseph G. O’Hara (1853–1939), built houses and barns and was well known as a builder including dozens of barns for farmers in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. O’Hara’s barn and rural in the county was descended from German Mennonites who immigrated to the early 19th century and bought land in Bedminster and Marlboro Townships. He spoke German and his education was in that language at the Deep Run School, where he learned the carpenter’s art of father to son in his workbooks. Judging from the furnishings, handwriting and manner of farmers he sold, left behind in addition to his extensive work, O’Hara wrote music and was a singing minister at Deep Run Mennonite Church, where he worshiped as well. The workshop notes to the right are some excerpts of his workshop book explaining what to do, how to do it, and the tools he used. The book is written in both German and English.

The book’s contents are as follows:
1. Simple framing drawings for the main section of the book.
2. Detailed drawings of the main section of the book.
3. Examples of barns and buildings in the surrounding area.
4. Instructions for building various structures.
5. A glossary of terms commonly used in carpentry and carpentry.
6. A section on the history of carpentry.

The book is an invaluable resource for anyone interested in learning about carpentry and building in the 19th century. It is a must-have for anyone interested in the history of carpentry and building in the Bucks County area.

For more information, visit [Website for the Bucks County Workbook].
Barn Tours and Survey Workshops—
Historic Barn & Farm Foundation,
Bucks County Audubon Society,
Historic Gettysburg-Adams County’s
Barn Project
Develop and Test Guidance for Evaluating Barns
Individual Listings

#PreservationHappensHere!
Pro-active Nomination
A nomination for a “remnant” barn, not extra-ordinary, that can serve as a model for future barn nominations.

#PreservationHappensHere!
PA SHPO Goals:

• Encourage efforts of HGAC and other community groups interested in survey

• Provide guidance and models for barns or other individual pieces of former farms

• Investigate other ways we can promote the appreciation and use of barns, outbuildings, and farm landscapes
Questions?

Barbara Frederick
PA SHPO
bafrederic@pa.gov

Jeremy Ammerman
PennDOT
jerammerma@pa.gov

April Frantz
PA SHPO
afrantz@pa.gov