

**Interviewer:**

*My first question is, could you please tell me a story or an experience that you've had with coyotes in Vermont?*

**Interviewee:**

*Good or bad?*

**Interviewer:**

*Good or bad.*

**Interviewee:**

*Okay. I think my most memorable is, um, in the 90s when my husband and I started farming, we had dry cows out on pasture, and one calved early, and she didn't come to the barn that morning so we went looking for her, and had started the calve with difficulty, and...coyote ate the calve that was stuck in her well, and we ultimately had to get rid of the animal, the mature animal because she was so traumatized, totally wiggled out anytime we tried to feed her.*

**Interviewer:**

*Wow. And can you explain why that story stands out, or is meaningful to you?*

**Interviewee:**

*Um, well...it sticks out because I think I was equally as traumatized. You know, the last thing you expect to find is um...a dry cow....you expect to find a calf partway out when there's difficulty or a calf on the ground....and when the back of the animal is covered with blood and she goes away from us to run away when we got close enough, um, it's a pretty traumatizing...a visual. Um, you know, we did ultimately get her caught to get a tranquilizer (inaudible). But you know that's (laughs) it's not a pleasant experience.*

**Interviewer:**

*I'm hoping to, in this next question, talk about coyotes a little more generally. And I'm wondering if you could rank your experiences of coyotes on a scale of one to nine, with one being negative and nine being positive?*

**Interviewee:**

*So I...I would be...one to nine...I would probably be a five or a six.*

**Interviewer:**

*Can you explain why you ranked experience that way?*

**Interviewee:**

*Because I understand that they're essential for the environment. Um, it's keeping me in, um, check the balances within our...our, I guess I can call it ecosystem or our wildlife. Um, you know, it keeps...you know, it helps, in my opinion, it helps get rid of big animals, you know, they're primarily a predator. You know, so, you know, I understand that they need to eat and they kind of keep other animals within a (inaudible) balance in the environment.*

**Interviewer:**

*Great, thank you. And in this next question, I mentioned that I'm a 4-H, so I'm really interested in how farmers think about land, the land that they're farming on, and animals that live on that land. And I'm wondering if you could tell me a story where land, livestock and coyotes all interacted. And you can think really broadly about interaction here, it doesn't have to be one super specific moment or story necessarily, but I'm just really interested in hearing you speak about a story about your experiences, or just your experiences in general, of how these three things land, livestock, and coyotes all interact and feel free to take your time to think on this one if you would like.*

**Interviewee:**

*Yeah, that one's a....you know...land is important. Um, I cherish it, and I cherish open land. Um, all the animals have been, even, you know, even coyote, they have a purpose here in our ecosystem. Um, you know, they um....hm....I just lost my thoughts (laughs)....[pause]...Now I don't know that I -- other than the negatives -- I don't know that I've had a positive where all three interact. Um, you know, I, I was born and raised on a farm, my husband and I...I went to college for agriculture, worked on dairy farm before my husband and I bought cows, and we farmed until '07, um and I don't know that there was ever a good experience where coyotes and cows were present at the same time. Um, you know, the, the coyotes, you know, they...if there were people around here off, but they'd scare off but they would also harass, they would feed on animals that were on pasture...So, yeah. I don't know if I answered that question.*

**Interviewer:**

No, that's great. That was a great answer. Yes, you did! And, um, you already begun...to have begun to anticipate my next couple of questions, which are just kind of breaking down the components of what you've already mentioned, and what the initial question was. And so I'm wondering if you could start off by talking about land, and how you think about land, and how it might...what role it might play in some of these experiences you've talked about. And feel free to talk about your relationship to land, if you feel like you have one to land, as broadly as you want, or if you want to connect it to some of the stories you've already told.

**Interviewee:**

Um...I value land. I believe it's very important. Um, I believe it's....I believe you need land to put food on the table and I believe that we need open land for wildlife, um, because if we keep building up our land that wildlife has no where to go so they're going to come closer and closer to home. Um, and, you know, I, I cherish going out on my property, we've got a farm just under 26 acres, um, and I love going out and track what wanders through my yard, and I don't care if it's a coyote, bobcat, or my own cat or dog. You know that, that, to me is an invaluable or super valuable. I guess I'm a very nature person and appreciate it.

**Interviewer:**

Awesome. And then you talked a little bit, especially in that first story about how traumatizing it was for you to see your heifer, or I think you said a dry cow, one of your cows who had given birth, and I'm hoping you could talk a little bit about whether or not livestock impacts what's meaningful to you in your experience as a farmer or in any of these stories. And similar to the land question, but what role do you see livestock playing in what's meaningful in your experience farming in Vermont?

**Interviewee:**

Um, I feel livestock, um, provides companionship, a livelihood, um, a challenge, uh, a greater way to grow your knowledge. Even if you go to school to understand and know what a dairy cow is, or livestock, um, I know you're gaining credit all through life of what you're working with those animals. There's something new to learn everyday, I feel like, um, they provided food, they provided milk or they provide meat. And, yeah, I'm not an artificial type of person, I like to know that my meat or my food is natural...naturally grown. So, you know, as much as I can be attached to an animal, I also respect the animal to give it a...um...oh, what's the word I want....a humane killing and slaughter and I'll be eating it at my dinner table. Um, but I'm also gonna be out there in the barn when we had a animal, I'd be crying because one of my favorite ones died. Um, you know, umm yeah.

**Interviewer:**

*Thank you, that was a great answer. And then the last in this kind of series of questions, um, is, and another similar question, but what role do you see coyotes playing, if any, in what's meaningful in these experiences?*

**Interviewee:**

*Boy...I see...I see...if we continue to develop with housing, coyotes might encroach upon home and be a problem. Um, I see it on my own farm, coyotes will come right up to our house. We actually had one we tracked them going into our barn when we had cows, but a couple winters ago, went out after a storm and we were looking around, and by golly, saw a coyote just wandering in this barn. And, you know, and I consider us somewhat rural, I don't feel that a coyote has a natural predator, so they're going to have to die of old age, or if they get in a fight, or if they get hit by a card. You know, I am not opposed to shooting a coyote because I feel there needs to be a balance, and you know, I don't feel they have a natural predator to keep them in balance and, you know, they can have a pretty big litter to be honest, and you know, I don't know how many litters we have heard. I see early cubs and late cubs in the summertime and, you know, they multiply pretty quickly. Um, I love seeing them, I think they're beautiful creatures, um, and I, you know, they're, they're an interesting animal to watch, you know, how they hunt. And, you know, I got to admit, I love watching them in snow trying to hunt mice, you know, there's just a cuteness about them I like...when they frolic.*

**Interviewer:**

*Well, we're almost done. I just have a few really quick background questions about some of these stories or experiences you've had. And I'm wondering if you could think back to that first story that you shared. Could you tell me where it took place?*

**Interviewee:**

*In Shoreham.*

**Interviewer:**

*Okay, great. And you know about what year that story took place in us.*

**Interviewee:**

*'93.*

**Interviewer:**

*Awesome. And you talked about this a little bit earlier, but what kind of things do you like to do outside, or do you do outside, whether it's for work or for recreation?*

***Interviewee:***

*Umm...currently, I like to garden, mow lawns, hike. I've be known hunt - deer and turkeys. Umm...just any time I can be outside is something agreeable. I very much like being outside, um, in the woods is a bonus, but just straight outside.*

***Interviewer:***

*Great, thank you. And then how long have you lived in Vermont?*

***Interviewee:***

*52 years.*

***Interviewer:***

*Awesome. And what town do you currently reside in?*

***Interviewee:***

*Addison.*

***Interviewer:***

*Great...what year were you born?*

***Interviewee:***

*1968.*

***Interviewer:***

*And then last two questions....What is your gender?*

***Interviewee:***

*Female.*

***Interviewer:***

*And then finally, what is your race or ethnicity?*

***Interviewee:***

*Oh, call me white or Caucasian or I...actually I don't even know what we're called anymore, I don't know what we use anymore...or American...I'm white.*