

"The Farmer Takes A Wife"

Signing their book, "The Farmer Takes A Wife", at left, Gisele Ireland, author and Kristina Maus, illustrator for a participant in the Rural Women's Seminar, Linda Schober. "We are working on a second book," said the gals. It is a woman's viewpoint on farming and it is humorous. It is called "Bumps In Your Coverall". "The Farmer Takes A Wife" can be bought for \$4.00 a copy and can be ordered from Concerned Farm Women, Box 457, Chesley, Ontario N0G 1L0.



Local rural and farm women completely enjoyed the Northern Ontario Rural Women's Seminar held last week while finding out more about colour draping and make-up, the long term options for their business, computers, women's health and assertiveness training.

One of the topics discussed was "The Farmer takes a Wife", a new book which voices the concerns of today's farm women.

Informing the women on this study by Concerned Farm Women were the author of the book, Gisele Ireland, and the illustrator, Kristina Maus.

The book, a profile of farm women and financial stress in the 1980's, raises questions now faced by farm women.

The vital statistics of the farm wives show that 79% are between 25-54 years of age; 99% are married to a farmer 25-59 years old (82%); 72% have lived on a farm for more than 10 years. They are better educated than their husbands: 40% women have over grade 13 while 27% men have

over grade 13. Sixty percent have had off farm work in the last 10 years - of the 33% presently working off the farm: 50% are in professional jobs, 21% in service jobs and 19% in clerical jobs.

The farmer's wife cares for a household of 2-5 members (86%), 95% do childcare, 100% cook, wash up for the family, 92% feed hired help; 100% do family laundry; 34% do laundry for hired help; 84% entertain business guests.

Of the farm work (regular or frequent) 55% of all the women do chores - 23% do it year round, full time; 87% feed and water livestock; 81% doctor animals; 56% clean barns; 74% do harvesting; 54% do milking; 51% do plowing, discing, operate equipment; 89% pick up supplies and parts; 68% supervise family members working; 21% maintain farm equipment; 56% repair and maintain farm buildings and fences; 12% apply fertilizer, herbicides, insecticides.

Concerning the farm administration, 87% of

the farm wives pay farm bills; 81% keep farm accounts; 96% handle business phone calls; 33% prepare farm income tax; 42% handle sales people; 48% supervise hired help; 46% do daily decision making; 22% decide cropping/stocking policy; 86% share financial decision making with

their husbands. How does the farm women estimate their value of their contribution to the farm? 49% felt that they were worth \$3,000 - \$10,000 per year; worth nothing - 6%; \$6-\$1,000 - 17%; \$1,001 - \$5,000 - 43%; \$5,001 - \$20,000 - 32%; \$20,001 - \$50,000 - 2%. One gal said "priceless".

*"The Farmer Takes a Wife" are
Gisele Ireland, author, and
Kristina Maus, illustrator, for a participant
in the Ontario Rural Women's
Seminar of Cache Bay.
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