

The Farmer is the Man - a song from the 1870s

When the farmer comes to town with his wagon broken down,
Oh the farmer is the one who feeds them all.
If you'll only look and see I think you will agree,
That the farmer is the one who feeds them all.

The farmer is the man, the farmer is the man,
Lives on credit til the fall,
Then they take him by the hand and they lead him from the land
And the middleman's the one who gets it all.

When the banker says he's broke and the merchant's up in smoke
They forget that it's the farmer feeds them all.
It would would them to the test if the farmer took a rest,
Then they'd know that it's the farmer feeds them all.

The farmer is the man, the farmer is the man,
Lives on credit til the fall,
And his pants are wearing thin, his condition it's a sin,
He forgot that he's the one who feeds us all.

- 1- According to this song, why is the farmer important to everybody?
- 2- Why do you think the farmer's wagon is "broken down"?
- 3- According to this song, why are the farmers losing their land?
- 4- Who do you think is the middlemen are who "get it all"?
- 5- In your opinion, why are the middlemen getting rich while the farmers remain poor?

Farmers in the U.S.

Year	Farm Pop %	Average Size	Machinery	Daily Earn	
1880	43.8	134 acres		\$406	.90
1890	42.3	137		494	.95
1900	41.9	147		750	1.00
1910	34.9	139		1,265	1.35

William Jennings Bryan's Speech to the 1896 Democratic Party Convention

1) "There are those who believe that if you will only legislate to make the well-to-do prosperous, their prosperity will leak through on those below. The democratic idea, however, has been that if you legislate to make the masses prosperous, their prosperity will find its way up through every class which rests upon them."

2) "You come to us and tell us that the great cities are in favor of the gold standard; we reply that the great cities rest upon our broad and fertile prairies. Burn down your cities and leave our farms, and your cities will spring up again as if by magic; but destroy our farms and the grass will grow in the streets of every city in the country."

3) "Having behind us the producing masses of this nation and the world, supported by the commercial interests, and the toilers everywhere, we will answer their demand for a gold standard by saying to them; You shall not press down upon the brow of labor this crown of thorns, you shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold."