

'HE LOVES FARMING, BUT FEELS IT'S HOPELESS'

BY MIKE WILSON



Farm wife looks for answers to the silence between husband and son

ONCE IN A great while we get notes from readers looking for help with difficult family business problems. That was certainly the case when we received the following letter from a farm wife, who asked us to publish her letter anonymously:

"I am the wife of a crop and cattle farmer who is in partnership with two brothers. My 38-year-old son has worked with his dad and uncles for six-plus years now and can't seem to advance.

"My intentions are not to put the farm family down; I am just disappointed and need to know if I can do or say something to get their attention. I think you can gather that the wives seem to not be included in plans here. I am little informed. I've been in the family for 40 years, and never caused a riff. But I need to know the future for my son. He has no say whatsoever; he is a hired hand. He had hope, but is now depressed and ready to go somewhere

else. He loves farming, but feels it's hopeless.

"It's sad to me that my own husband, my son's dad, will not talk about this. He becomes hostile, like I'm taking something from him. I have fought this in my heart and mind for decades. We all have a good surface relationship but avoid speaking about future plans for our children. My husband is not willing to talk at all; he just becomes quiet. If I talk to my son alone or ride with him in the semi, my husband tends to be more hostile toward my son. I have decided my son needs action, and I am determined to get him support. I have made bad decisions and so has my son, but he is a great human being and deserves more. I just need to know if I am right to want resolution. What is my position as the wife and mother of the generation to help carry on the operation? There are cousins and siblings to consider, too."

THE EXPERTS WEIGH IN 'I think he should leave'

Your situation is not unique. Many very traditional

