

# Hutterite Agriculture in Alberta: The Contribution of an Ethnic Isolate

SIMON M. EVANS

*The Hutterites are a German speaking religious sect. They live communally, holding “all things common.” This characteristic separates them from the Mennonites and the Amish, with whom they share a common Anabaptist tradition. The Hutterites have resisted assimilation and have maintained their language and culture. The three original colonies, established along the James River in Dakota Territory in 1874, have grown to number some five hundred colonies distributed across five states and four Canadian provinces.*

*This article describes and evaluates the contribution of Hutterite colonies to agriculture in Alberta, Canada. They own about 4 percent of Alberta’s farmland but produce 80 percent of the province’s eggs, 33 percent of its hogs, and more than 10 percent of its milk. This productivity is based on the Brethren’s ability to deploy their relatively large labor force to carry out diversified mixed farming. Their willingness to embrace modern science and technology is matched by the links they have been able to establish with marketing chains in agribusiness.*

**I**N LATE AUGUST 1971, I VISITED Pincher Creek Hutterite Colony. I was attending a field school organized by the Geography Department of the University of Calgary to introduce incoming graduate students to southern Alberta. I had been in Canada ten days. The scale of Hutterite operations—the massed machinery, the huge pig barns, and the gleaming grain silos—impressed our group. What a contrast it was to the isolated family ranch in the foothills where we had camped for the night, and to the abandoned homesteads with their neglected relict windbreaks that we had witnessed. The colony buzzed with quiet purpose—everybody had a job to do and a responsibility to fulfill for the good of the community.<sup>1</sup> While their old-fashioned clothing, their German language, their simple communal dwellings, and their hospi-

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tality all demanded attention, it was the image of the colony as a whole that stayed with me as we drove away. This thriving farm village presented a stark contrast to the stereotypical narrative of the pioneer homesteader battling isolation, blizzards, grass fires, and grasshoppers.<sup>2</sup> Here was a community that nurtured its members from birth to death and had the economic heft to cope with environmental and economic vicissitudes, an idealistic Christian society that could boast of four centuries of history.<sup>3</sup> I determined to find out more.

The Hutterites are a German-speaking religious brotherhood, and their Anabaptist faith that both holds them together and sets them apart. They attempt to mirror the life of the early Christian church and to “hold all things common.”<sup>4</sup> Theirs is an all-encompassing faith. God’s name is hallowed by their lives lived in community. Work in the fields or in the kitchen is esteemed as worship just as much as time spent in their daily church services. Each family occupies a separate apartment in multi-family dwellings, but food is prepared in a single large kitchen, and the community eats their meals together. This communal life separates them from other Anabaptist groups like the Mennonites and the Amish, with whom they share so much common history.<sup>5</sup> Individual Hutterites own very little, and “wages” are nominal. The community provides for all its members from birth to death.

Unlike many other ethnic groups that have settled in the Canadian prairies and northern Great Plains, the Hutterites have resisted assimilation and have maintained their language and culture since their arrival in North America in 1874. A colony—a farm village home to some fifteen or twenty families—is the essential unit of Hutterite society. Hog and chicken barns, huge hangar-like machine shops, grain storage and drying facilities make up a concentration of agricultural infrastructure unmatched by even large corporate farms. Less obvious and often screened by trees are the multi-family houses, the kitchen, dining-room, school, and church.<sup>6</sup>

To maintain the intimacy implied by the word “brotherhood,” the Hutterites do not allow a colony to grow beyond one hundred fifty people. Well before this threshold is reached, plans will be laid to establish a daughter colony. In due course, the colony will split and half the people will move to the new place.<sup>7</sup> Until the 1970s, this process of division—often referred to as hiving—took place every fifteen years. Today, because family size has decreased, it is often thirty years or more before a new daughter colony becomes necessary.<sup>8</sup>

The Hutterites are divided into four clan groups, or *leut* (people). One of the communal groups that undertook the hazardous journey from Ukraine to the Dakota frontier was led by Michael Waldner, who was a blacksmith.

They became known as “the smith’s people,” or Schmiedeleut. Another group followed Darius Walter and were soon referred to as the Dariusleut, while a third party was loyal to Jacob Wipf, a teacher, and were christened the Lehrerleut.<sup>9</sup> At first, relations with noncommunal Hutterites, the Prairieleut, who had moved from Russia with them, were close, and intermarriage was common.<sup>10</sup> By 1914, however, boundaries among the three communal groups and their neighbors had become less porous. When the Hutterites were forced to leave South Dakota in 1918, an important spatial division took place. The Schmiedeleut moved just across the Canadian border into Manitoba, while the Dariusleut and the Lehrerleut moved to Alberta.<sup>11</sup> During the 1990s, a split took place in the large Schmiedeleut clan. Differences between the more conservative brothers who venerated tradition and those who were prepared to countenance some changes proved to be irreconcilable. The Hutterites now recognize two groups, Schmiedeleut One (the more liberal group) and Schmiedeleut Two (the more traditional group).<sup>12</sup>

Alberta is home to the Dariusleut and the Lehrerleut. The differences between the groups may seem slight to outsiders, involving as they do nuances of dress, custom, and idiom. Nevertheless, the two clans have grown apart during the past century and are endogamous. The Lehrerleut tend to be more conservative with regard to their church services, music, dress, and socialization processes. Dariusleut colonies enjoy more individual autonomy with regard to when, where, and how they establish new colonies. They are regarded as dangerously liberal by the Lehrerleut. These generalizations of “liberal” and “conservative,” however, apply only to social and cultural norms. Pragmatically, the Hutterites regard “making a living” as a vital contribution to the maintenance of their way of life. In this sphere they are prepared to embrace the best machinery and the most innovative science. Thus, it would not be unusual to observe a well-run Lehrerleut colony strictly adhering to every facet of Hutterite culture, while at the same time adopting progressive, even aggressive, agricultural technology. Likewise, there are supposedly more liberal Dariusleut colonies that pursue activities like keeping sheep and geese, or maintain a shoemaking and harness shop, which are traditional but not rational in an economic sense. Differences between the clan groups are matched by diversity within each *leut*. A brief anecdote will illustrate this. One group of Dariusleut colonies protested having to have their photographs on their driving licenses, for they regarded photographic images as an infringement on the second commandment concerning idols. They took their case all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada. Meanwhile, the three Wipf brothers,

from another Dariusleut colony, were happy to pose for an advertisement for Alberta Milk in a major periodical.<sup>13</sup>

Beyond the central role of communal living, several other attributes help to distinguish the Hutterites. Their pacifism and unwillingness to participate in military service led to their flight from Ukraine.<sup>14</sup> Some forty years later it resulted in their exodus from South Dakota to Canada, when patriotic sentiments turned violent against the German-speaking and isolated group unresponsive of the war effort.<sup>15</sup> During World War II, hostility flared up once again against the Brethren in Alberta. All sales of land to “enemy aliens” were forbidden during the war years, and then in 1947, the Communal Property Act was passed by the Alberta legislature. Under its provisions no new colonies could be established within forty miles of an existing colony, and all Hutterite land purchases had to be approved by the government.<sup>16</sup> The objective of the act was to force the dispersal of colonies so that they could be assimilated more easily. The Hutterites followed the letter of the law and a regular pattern of new colonies was added to the two established core areas. Within a decade the Hutterites were forced to seek land outside the province, first in Montana and then in Saskatchewan.<sup>17</sup> The discriminatory legislation was finally repealed in 1973, and the Hutterite settlement pattern in Alberta has gradually adjusted in a variety of ways discussed elsewhere.<sup>18</sup>

The Hutterites are often described as an “ethnic isolate” because one of the foundations of their way of life is to live separate from “the world.” They perceive themselves as an ark adrift on the stormy sea of secular society. The little flock must keep themselves apart as far as possible from the contagion of all that is worldly. They aim to be in the world but not of it.<sup>19</sup> To this end they pursue agriculture in rural locations and may purposefully seek out isolated locations for their colonies. Moreover, each colony is to a considerable degree self-sufficient. Staples like meat, poultry, eggs, milk, and vegetables are all produced on the colony. However, there is always tension between their deeply held spiritual aspiration to maintain separation from the world and their absolute need to interact with the market economy in order to make a living. One strategy they adopt is to entrust necessary business contacts to the hands of a few senior members of the community, and to establish long-lasting relationships with a limited number of outsiders such as accountants, lawyers, realtors, and dealers in agricultural machinery. Of course, the maintenance of separation from worldly influences is increasingly difficult in an age of cell phones and the Internet.<sup>20</sup>

The Hutterites are also a genetic isolate because their attempts to maintain

separation from the host society have been so successful. They do not evangelize and very few individuals or families have joined them over the years. Thus their gene pool is somewhat limited, and relationships can be traced back for many generations. Their carefully maintained records of births, marriages, and deaths provide invaluable data on their family trees. For this reason the Hutterites have been sought out as case studies by demographers, geneticists, and medical researchers.<sup>21</sup> Anthropologists and sociologists have also been drawn to study the Brethren.<sup>22</sup> They are of particular interest precisely because they have achieved their goal of living apart from the host society, and yet the necessity of “making a living” draws them into sophisticated relationships with agribusiness. This is another of the contradictions and complexities of Hutterite culture.

One final attribute of “the Hutterite way” deserves mention. The Brethren aspire to a simple ascetic lifestyle. They are Plain People like the Amish and the Old Order Mennonites.<sup>23</sup> They make their own clothing and furniture and try to limit purchases of consumer goods. While the communal kitchens and laundries display the most up-to-date appliances, most living rooms and bedrooms in contrast are quite austere, the only wall decoration in one typical room being a calendar from an elevator company. The number of community-owned vehicles and their use is strictly controlled. There are no televisions, and computers, if present, are confined to the school and the colony manager’s office. By pursuing agricultural activities with the aid of modern technology and science, while at the same time adopting a self-sufficient lifestyle and strict limitations on consumer spending, the Hutterites have been able to accumulate capital on a scale, and at a pace, that would be the envy of any family farmer. In the past, these savings have been urgently needed to purchase land for daughter colonies. Today, with the period between colony divisions extended to thirty years or more, it is more difficult for leaders to curb demands for more consumer goods. Change is manifest everywhere. In the kitchen there may be commercial ice cream bars and prepared kebabs from Superstore; plastic toys and scooters have replaced most of the homemade wagons and wooden toys. Indeed, some new colonies look like upscale suburban row housing, complete with finished basements and several bathrooms.

Enough has been said to introduce the Hutterites, a communal people who try to keep to themselves. Folks in Lethbridge, Winnipeg, or Sioux Falls come across Hutterites shopping in Value Village or selling goods at farmers’ markets, and they are impressed with their “old world” clothing and their apparent adherence to traditional ways. Closer observation over several decades

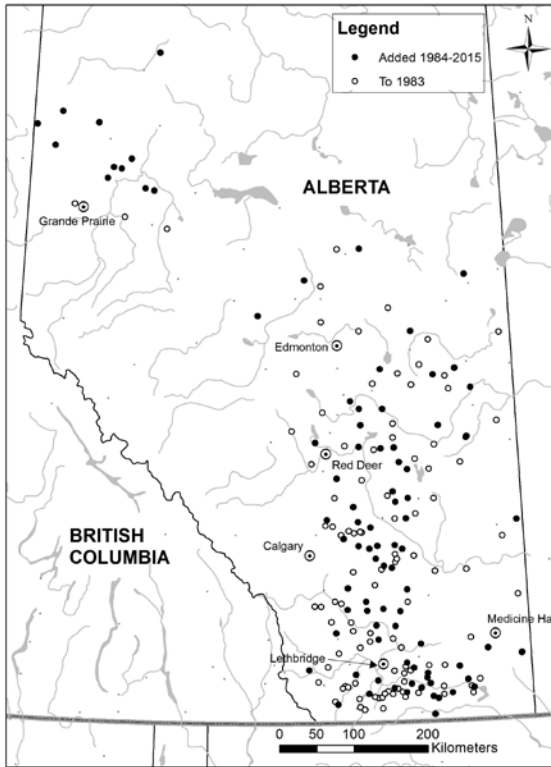
shows that the culture is dynamic and that the pace of change is increasing. As the number of colonies has doubled and doubled again, the range of contrasts among colonies and clan groups has increased. As Rod Janzen observed, "Writing about Hutterite life is complicated."<sup>24</sup>

The aim of this essay is to tease out a single theme from the complex web of beliefs and activities that constitute Hutterite life. The objective is to describe the contribution that this growing ethnic group makes to agricultural production in Alberta, and to illustrate some of the links between their cultural attributes and their success as farmers.<sup>25</sup> Fifty years ago John Bennett remarked that the Hutterites were "pre-adapted to succeed" in the difficult environment of their new home.<sup>26</sup> His words have proved to be prescient. The scale and diversity of their farming, enabled by a large labor force and underpinned by capital accumulation made possible by a self-sufficient and ascetic way of life, have given them advantages over neighboring family farms that are often struggling to survive.<sup>27</sup>

Scholars who have extensively studied the Hutterites' way of life and narrated their history. Two recent books provide an up-to-date review and emphasize the increasing diversity within the ethnic group. The first is Rod Janzen and Max Stanton's *The Hutterites in North America*, and the second is Yossi Katz and John Lehr's *Inside the Ark: The Hutterites in Canada and the United States*.<sup>28</sup> These texts build on the solid foundation laid by John A. Hostetler, who published his *Hutterite Society* in 1974.<sup>29</sup>

There has been a dearth of publications focused on Hutterite agriculture. The two detailed studies that do exist date back to the 1960s and 1970s. Anthropologist John Bennett spent two field seasons living on Hutterite colonies in southeastern Saskatchewan. He was able to compare their agricultural activities, objectives, and strategies with those of aboriginals, farmers, and ranchers living in the region. His conclusions were based on a detailed analysis of the purchases and sales of each group.<sup>30</sup> Geographer John Ryan established a relationship of trust with the leader of the Schmiedeleut in Manitoba. He obtained tax returns from all the colonies and used this unique data source to measure the contribution of the Hutterites to the agricultural output of the province.<sup>31</sup> Unfortunately, times have changed, and the likelihood of obtaining this kind of data on a state or province-wide scale is virtually nonexistent.<sup>32</sup>

For my own part, I was able to visit fifty of the seventy colonies in Alberta during 1972. My focus was on the diffusion of the Hutterites; the "hiving process" of colony division; the demographic pressures spurring the establishment of daughter colonies; and the factors influencing the choice of a new



**Figure 1.** The location of Hutterite colonies in Alberta, 2015. Drawn from *The Original Hutterite Telephone and Address Book, 2015*, and Google Earth.

location, rather than on agriculture.<sup>33</sup> A decade later I extended my fieldwork to Manitoba, Montana, and South Dakota.<sup>34</sup> This report on Hutterite agriculture in Alberta is based on forty years of interest in the Brethren, and an attempt to stay abreast of the scholarly and popular media reports concerning them. I have continued to spend time with the Hutterites, visiting eleven of the twelve Peace River District colonies in 2013. And I interviewed leaders of the case-study colonies in 2016. I am grateful for the hospitality, patience, and courtesy with which I have been welcomed.

In 2011, there were one hundred seventy Hutterite colonies in Alberta.<sup>35</sup> They owned an estimated 2 million acres of Alberta's 50.5 million acres of farmland, or about 4 percent (Figure 1).<sup>36</sup> This represented an increase of four times since 1971, when a commission of Alberta's government reported eighty-two colonies with 721,559 acres, which amounted to 1 percent of the province's agricultural land.<sup>37</sup> Looking forward fifteen years, it is likely that



Date	Number of colonies	Hutterite/acres	Alberta farmland (millions of acres)	Hutterite %
1947	33	176,000	42.9	0.41
1971	82	721,559	49.5	0.68
1996	136	1,500,000	52.0	2.90
2006	161	1,771,000	52.9	3.39
2011	170	2,040,000	50.5	4.04
2027	242	3,267,000	49.0	6.67

## Sources:

1947 A.J.F Zieglschmid, *Das Klein-Geschichtsbuch Der Hutterischen Bruder* (Philadelphia: Carl Schurz Memorial Foundation, 1947).

1971 Alberta, Select Committee of the Assembly, *Report on Communal Property, 1972* (Edmonton: Queen's Printer, 1972), p. 17.

1996 Canada, Statistics Canada, 1996 Census, special tabulation *Vancouver Sun*, April 8, 2000.

2006 and 2011 Canada, Statistics Canada, 2006 and 2011 Censuses.

Figures in italics are estimates based on the number of colonies and their average size.

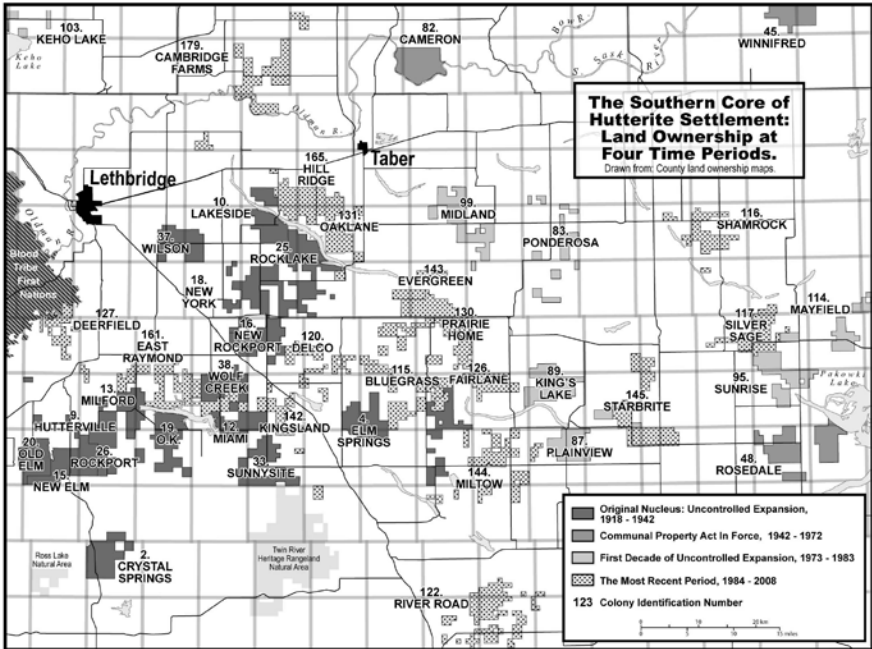
2027 estimates are based on current trends.

**Table 1.** Hutterite Landownership in Alberta.

there will be some 242 colonies, and their average size will have increased to between thirteen thousand and fourteen thousand acres. The Brethren will own 3.3 million acres. At the same time it seems probable that the acreage in farms in the province will continue to decrease to around 45 million acres, so that the Hutterites will own about 7.3 percent of the total (Table 1). Hutterites are very conscious that their growing landholdings may be a cause for hostility among the rural population. They emphasize that a colony of twelve thousand acres supports twenty families, for an average of six hundred acres per family. They point out that few family farms could survive on a farm of that limited extent. The one hundred seventy colonies represent but 0.39 percent of the farms in Alberta.

The Hutterite population has continued to grow during the same time period and numbered 15,600 in 2011. But the host population has expanded at much the same rate, fueled by strong in-migration. The Hutterites represented 0.41 percent of Albertans in 1971, and 0.43 percent in 2011. However, the steady decline in the number of farmers means that the Brethren now make up about 10 percent of the Alberta farm population. The age structure of the





**Figure 2.** The southern core of Hutterite settlement within which Hutterite colonies are a dominant presence. Drawn by the author from County landownership maps.

farm population suggests that this trend will continue.<sup>38</sup>

Hutterite colonies are not evenly distributed over available farmland in Alberta. After their arrival as refugees from South Dakota in 1918, the eleven original colonies grew to number thirty-one by the outbreak of World War II. Two core areas of settlement emerged, one south of Lethbridge and another along the Rosebud River northeast of Calgary. Today, these core areas have both infilled and expanded. For example, the map of the southern core shows that colonies established before 1939 formed a block south of Lethbridge (Figure 2). There was some expansion of colonies eastward during the late 1970s, but during the past two decades, many new colonies have been located adjacent to their parent colonies, and the density of Hutterite landholding has increased. Within the core areas the Brethren have become the dominant landowners.

A young Hutterite man, the son of the manager of a very successful and progressive colony, boasted that “We [the Hutterites] own 10 percent of the productive capacity and produce 19 percent of the agricultural products in the province.” This claim was hyperbolic but contained two important truths:

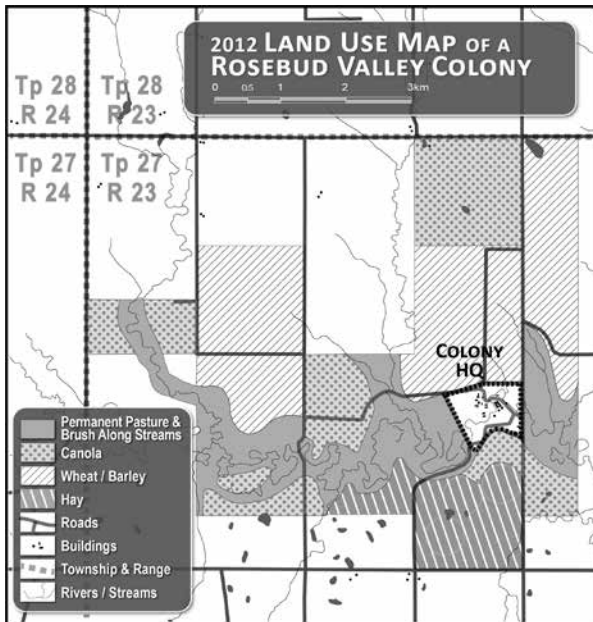
the Hutterites do make a significant contribution to agricultural production in Alberta, and, because of their involvement in varied livestock production, they do “hit above their weight.” In 1996, the Hutterites owned 2.9 percent of Alberta’s farmland and produced 4.35 percent of farm receipts.<sup>39</sup> Census data on Hutterite crop production and livestock returns are not available on a regular basis for privacy reasons, but various sources suggest that the colonies produce 80 percent of the province’s eggs, 33 percent of the hogs, and more than 10 percent of the milk.<sup>40</sup> The columns of small town newspapers are full of reports about applications for planning permission from colonies seeking to expand existing farm infrastructure. Granum Colony received approval to build a soybean processing barn. Later they gained permission to run the facility twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.<sup>41</sup> White Lake Colony received permission to increase the size of their chicken barn from twenty-three thousand to forty-five thousand birds, while Wanham Colony received approval for a 5,200-head beef feedlot. Finally, the Peace River Regional District issued a permit for two wind farms to be constructed on land owned by South Peace Colony.<sup>42</sup>

To proceed from a general overview to the particular characteristics of Hutterite farms, five representative colonies were selected. Two of these were established in 1918 in the original core areas of settlement; one was from the Peace River Country; one from Vulcan County between Calgary and Lethbridge; and the last from the southeast corner of the province.<sup>43</sup>

The first colony chosen is one of several nestled in a coulee along the tiny Rosebud River. It is a Dariusleut colony established in 1918 (Figure 3). Its land base has not expanded much since that time. The colony owns 6,400 acres and leases a further 1,000 acres. They established a daughter colony in 2007 and presently have a rather small population of about fifty. They grow canola, barley, wheat, peas, and have a section of irrigated hay. About half their crops are used on the colony for livestock feed. They have a milking herd of sixty Holstein cows, a major hog-raising operation, and a mixed herd of beef cattle that range on the permanent grass along the floodplain. On a smaller scale they grow turkeys for seasonal markets and produce honey. This is a rather small and traditional colony, but it has two characteristics of note (Figure 4). First, more and more of the bottomlands along the stream have been plowed up for crops. During the 1970s, all the flood plain was in permanent grass, but today more than half of it is cropped, a change made possible by improved machinery and motivated by good grain prices. Second, this small



**Figure 3.** A typical Hutterite colony situated along the flood plain of the Rosebud River. Residences in the foreground with corrals and grain storage to the rear. Photo by author.



**Figure 4.** A colony on the Rosebud River showing crops grown in 2012. This colony owns 6500 acres and leases a further 1000 acres. Drawn from aerial photographs.

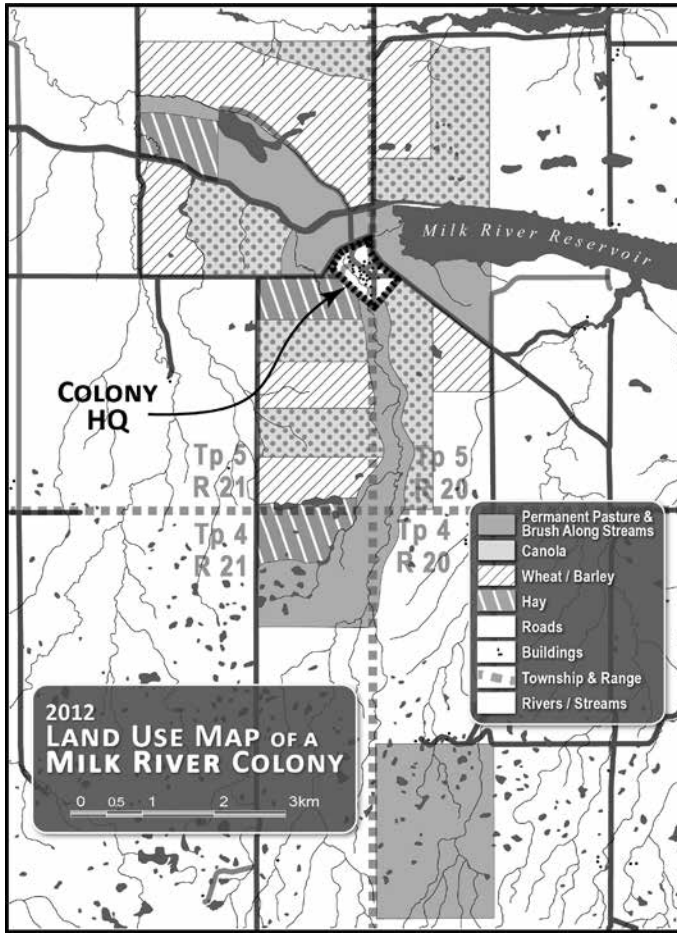


**Figure 5.** This colony, located close to Grande Prairie, Alberta, this was one of the first colonies established in the Peace River Region. Notice the separation of the living quarters on the left of the access road from the working area to the right. Photo by the author.

colony relies to a marked degree on the output of its garden. The colony maintains a stall at the Cross Roads Market in Calgary all the year round. The staples are seasonal vegetables, corn, carrots, onions, potatoes, and beets, but they also sell honey, eggs, chickens, bread, and some fruit from British Columbia.

The sample colony selected from those in the Peace River Country occupies a scenic site not far from Grande Prairie (Figure 5). This is another Dariusleut colony. Established in 1977, it was one of the first colonies to locate in the Peace, drawn by lower land prices and a desire to escape overcrowding of colonies in southern Alberta.<sup>44</sup> It has gradually doubled its landholdings and now owns twelve thousand acres of rolling cropland. There is no rangeland in permanent pasture, and the colony does not have a dairy or a beef herd. It concentrates on crop production and has invested in grain drying and storage equipment, but it also produces hogs, eggs, and fryer chickens.

The third colony chosen was one of the original colonies established in the southern core in 1918. It is a Lehrerleut colony. The colony split in 1992 to establish Miltow Colony, but the population has rebounded to one hundred twenty today. It is a relatively small colony, owning 5,500 acres. In addition to



**Figure 6.** A colony in the southern core of Hutterite settlement showing the crops grown in 2012. The southern portion of this colony's 5500 acres include sections of pasture on the Milk River Ridge. Drawn from aerial photographs.

canola, wheat, and barley, their acreage sown to peas has grown considerably. The peas are used for feed and have reduced the need to purchase soya bean supplements. They also have a section of irrigated land on which they grow alfalfa and corn for silage. This colony has extended its cropped acreage by plowing up former rangeland on the higher ground to the south of the colony. As well as hogs, dairy, and eggs, this colony has a large beef herd (four hundred head) that is pastured on the Milk River Ridge (Figure 6).

The next Lehrerleut colony was established in 1968. It was one of a handful of colonies that defied the Communal Property Act.<sup>45</sup> Land was bought by individual Hutterites a few years before the discriminatory act was eventually



repealed. This big thriving colony epitomizes the innovative and progressive image of Hutterite agriculture. The pig barns and grain silos loom like an industrial plant above a shallow slough and are framed by the distant Rocky Mountains. This colony crops eleven thousand acres, and not a square meter is wasted. Plowing is pushed aggressively to field boundaries and to the margins of seasonal ponds. There is no permanent grassland and only a tiny pocket of hay land. While the primary objective is to provide feed for their livestock, this colony grows a number of special crops for contracts, as we shall see later. They have three big hog barns which house three hundred fifty sows and their progeny and one hundred head of Holstein dairy cows, but their new egg barn demands particular attention. This huge facility houses both thirteen thousand laying hens and a similar number of pullets—the next generation of egg producers. There are no constraining cages, although there are hutches where hens may retire to lay their eggs. This barn was the brainchild of the colony manager, who was acutely aware of growing concern among the urban public about the conditions under which poultry are raised. He determined to go far beyond what the law demanded and banish cages altogether. Closed circuit cameras were installed to better monitor the well-being of the flock and to provide potential customers with a picture of the source of their eggs. This barn is “energy neutral”; solar panels, heat exchangers, and extremely efficient insulation mean that enough power is generated by the building to meet its needs. The Alberta government and Egg Farmers of Alberta have supported this endeavor.<sup>46</sup>

Visiting a colony in the southeast corner of the province after more than two decades was quite an eye opener. This is dry country, close to the heart of Palliser’s Triangle. Twenty years ago it was mostly rangeland, and the limited cropland was strip-farmed using dry-farming techniques. Grudging yields of fifteen to twenty bushels per acre were forthcoming in good years. Today, field crops stretch away in all directions, and rangeland is confined to the sides of coulees. Crops of forty to fifty bushels an acre are routine. This transformation has been achieved by careful rotation of crops incorporating canola and peas, and by the use of drought-resistant seed varieties bolstered by the use of fertilizers and pesticides. It has also been made possible by the extension of a water pipeline from Raymond Reservoir, one hundred thirty kilometers to the west, which provides water for people and stock. This line now supplies sixteen colonies and about one hundred farm families.

The colony takes advantage of its dry and sunny location to produce hard Durham wheat. They also grow barley, canola, peas, and lentils. They have a

	AB Dariusleut	AB Lehrerleut
<b>Crops</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Hogs</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Beef</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Poultry</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Dairy</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Other livestock</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Non farm</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>

**Table 2.** Revenue from various sources, percent of total income. SOURCE: Blacksheep Consulting, "Understanding Business in the Colony," (Calgary: Unpublished Survey, 2009).

contract with a nutritionist who helps them decide what proportion of canola and peas can be incorporated into their livestock feed. They balance the value of the crop sales against the costs of buying soybeans and other supplements. This colony also has a big garden and markets some of its products across Canada. They also own three thousand acres of rangeland on the shores of Pacowki Lake, where they run a herd of beef cattle.

Although each of these five colonies has its own character, leadership style, and mix of agricultural activities, they have much in common. They share much the same rotation of crops, and they all raise livestock of one kind or another. These observations of individual colonies fit comfortably into a broad survey of Hutterite colonies conducted across the prairies. The details of the revenue derived from various sources on Alberta Hutterite colonies are shown in Table 2. Crops, hogs, dairy, and poultry are the major dollar earners. The main difference between the Dariusleut and the Lehrerleut is that the Dariusleut colonies produce more beef. This reflects both the location of Dariusleut colonies in the more broken country along the foothills to the west of the province and in the north, and a cultural preference for permanent pasture and cattle.

In short, the Hutterites, by combining extensive grain farming with intensive livestock enterprises, exhibit a degree of diversity in their agricultural activities unmatched by non-Hutterites. This would be impossible without a relatively large and flexible labor force.

A large work force is a prerequisite for the diversified agriculture that the Hutterites practice. A colony of one hundred souls might have twenty retired seniors, thirty children in school, and fifty men and women to do the work. Contrast this with a family farm blessed with three sons or daughters that has a total labor force of only five at their disposal. The older and more experi-





**Figure 7.** Hutterite women putting up corn from their garden. Photo by and courtesy of Lenita Waldner, Hutterian Brethren website, [www.hutterites.org/galleries/work-and-agriculture](http://www.hutterites.org/galleries/work-and-agriculture).

enced men on the colony typically manage various departments: a field boss, pig man, dairyman, and chicken man. Others will be responsible for the vital services that help the colony run smoothly: a carpenter, electrician, plumber, mechanic, and expert in metal fabrication. This leaves a pool of young men from fifteen to twenty-five years of age who provide the “muscle.” A sixteen-year-old may be assigned a million dollar piece of equipment as his primary responsibility, but he will be available for other tasks when his combine or truck is not required. If you ask a young Hutterite what his job is, he is likely to reply with a laugh, “I’m a jack of all trades and a master of none.” However, these young people serve an unofficial apprenticeship in a variety of fields and pick up skills that will stand them in good stead. Young Chris Gros (age nineteen) had been up at 4 a.m. milking, a task that he shared week-on/week-off with a colleague. He came home for a bacon and egg sandwich and was off to drive a batch of chickens to be processed. Rebecca’s son at Birch Lake came in from his work in the pig barn, picked up a thermos, and hurried out to combine. Every morning the manager will have a meeting with his department heads to determine what needs doing according to the weather and the season.

The primary role of Hutterite women is to keep the colony clean and the people well-fed. This is no mean task. They have to provide solid meals for a community of one hundred or more three times a day, while keeping their families provided with clean clothes and the whole colony spotless. Kitchen duties are rotated on a weekly basis, and this enables the women to perform a significant secondary role in agricultural production. They are responsible

for the colony garden and for preserving the products that help to make the colony relatively self-sufficient. The huge garden of one colony visited during the summer of 2016 had been completely wiped out by hail. The women were devastated, not primarily because of financial losses or possible shortages, but rather because they enjoyed the camaraderie of working outside together in the garden. They were also very conscious that their efforts usually make a substantial contribution to the colony. The previous year, the garden earned close to \$250,000. This put them in a strong bargaining position when the colony discussed upgrades to the kitchen or the laundry. During our visit the women were busy processing the produce that had been gifted from other colonies to make good their losses (Figure 7). Women contribute informally to the decisions about what to grow in the garden and how much to sow of each crop, because they do so much of the work. Hutterite women are not “shrinking violets,” and they are prepared to help out wherever they are needed. The only absolute constraint on their activities is safety. Their flowing dresses can be a hazard around exposed machinery, and there can be no compromise with dress codes. Unlike the Amish women, who run thousands of small businesses, Hutterite communal culture means that their women’s energy, enthusiasm, and imagination is directed towards the well-being of the colony.<sup>47</sup>

Gender roles are well established on the colonies and frame the daily lives of men and women. However, they are not rigid; the provision of child care and the practice of rotating kitchen duties mean that women are free to do all manner of tasks around the colony. On one colony a group of women were painting a residence, while at another they were laying floor tiles in the kitchen. In one case, the wife of the dairyman, who had a grown family, was recognized as his stand-in and helper, a role usually filled by a man. Women also work alongside male family members in the carpenter’s shop, sanding and finishing furniture and kitchen cabinets. When emergencies occur, young women will turn their hands to almost any task that needs doing.<sup>48</sup>

During the late 1970s and 1980s, there was much discussion among Hutterite leaders and researchers about surplus labor and underemployment.<sup>49</sup> Mechanization on the land and automation in the hog and chicken barns had reduced the need for manual labor. Ministers were concerned that “the devil found work for idle hands.” This situation has been mitigated by the gradual decline in Hutterite birth rates. During the past thirty years, family size has decreased from eight to ten children per family, on average, to three to five. Moreover, the colonies have proved remarkably adaptable in finding new ways to make a living. Light industries have been developed by many

colonies, especially among the Schmiedeleut. In Alberta, various enterprises from hauling gravel to building prefabricated sheds, from plastics to custom furniture and ironwork, have been introduced. Managers have found ways to use their massive shops and carpentry facilities during the winter months. These initiatives provide employment and produce valuable monetary returns. For example, Birch Hills Colony was using wood affected by pine beetles to produce attractive beds and outdoor furniture.

Some colonies are experiencing labor shortages. One manager said he could use five or six more men immediately, and he even asked me about the temporary foreign worker program. This shortage of willing hands is a product of thirty years of declining birth rates coupled with defections among the fifteen- to twenty-five-year age group. After a colony has split, the new colony might have a population of fifty or sixty, and the pool of male laborers might be less than ten. If three or four leave the colony, a serious shortage could occur. Until the downturn in oil prices, the availability of high-paying jobs on the rigs was a powerful lure to young Hutterites. Four of the five sample colonies have a healthy enrollment in their schools of twenty-five to thirty children, but the fifth colony, which recently split, had only seven children in school. This low figure was not uncommon among colonies visited in the last few years. In the long term, some colonies may have to curtail the variety of their enterprises because of labor shortages. MacMillan Colony closed its dairy and sold its sheep flock for this reason. While most adult colony members may have assigned roles to ensure the farm works smoothly and efficiently, the labor force is very flexible and can be redeployed to meet short-term demands. At harvest time retired men and older children will lend a hand. One of the sample colonies has recently purchased a site for a daughter colony. A school bus leaves the parent colony every morning with some twenty to thirty craftsman and laborers, and a group of women to fix lunch and snacks during the day. They return every evening and have an early breakfast before leaving again to build up the new place. Hutterite manpower enables them to respond to local emergencies, whether it is filling sand bags along the Souris River, feeding flood victims in High River, or helping to contain a grassfire.

Research for this particular project has revealed the degree to which Hutterite colonies are integrated into agribusiness. The diversity and complexity of the supply chains to which they contribute is remarkable. Hutterite colonies have a number of characteristics that make them attractive to both wholesalers and processors. They produce relatively large amounts of uniform products on a regular and sustained basis. Moreover, they are responsive to

the unique demands of their clients. For example, they will refine their methods to produce hogs of a certain size and fat content. The colonies have also earned a reputation for reliability. The Hutterites are involved in agricultural production for the long term to support their culture and lifestyle. They value relationships with individuals and organizations and embrace ongoing contracts. This reduces uncertainty and risk for the buyers.

One of the sample colonies illustrates this web of market connections very well. First, it is involved with three products that are regulated by the provisions of supply management. Milk from their one-hundred-strong herd is collected by the Alberta Milk marketing board every two days; eggs, thirteen thousand a day, are picked up by Sparks Eggs under the auspices of the Alberta egg marketing board; and their quota of turkeys is sold to Lilydale and marketed through Costco. For twelve years the colony has sold all their hogs to Maple Leaf in Lethbridge. The pork is exported to Japan, and the Hutterite manager boasted that his hogs were on the shelf in a Tokyo grocery within thirty-two days! While the canola, spring wheat, and peas that are not needed for feed are sold on the open market, other crops are sold on contract. Since the demise of the Canadian Wheat Board, the colony has been able to sell malting barley direct to Alberta brewers, and last year they cropped 1,500 acres. The colony is blessed with conditions of temperature and rainfall that favor soft wheat production. This product is sold to Rogers in British Columbia for baking purposes. Another of the sample colonies has a very unexpected market for their hogs. They are picked up by a truck each week and delivered to Masami Food in Klamath Falls, Oregon, about one thousand kilometers away. The specialized pork products are all sold in Japan.

Nowhere are market linkages more important than in the Peace River District. Colonies located here are several hours' drive from major urban centers and the hubs of processing and wholesaling. They face up to this challenge with characteristic ingenuity. They mitigate the problem of distance from conventional markets by ensuring that they sell as much product as possible locally. The manager of Ridge Valley Colony commented, "We have our own markets . . . we have a lock on Peace River." He meant that they could sell most of their broiler chickens and eggs there. They have a contract with IGA and arrangements with some restaurants. Similarly, Grand View sells broilers and eggs in nearby Grand Prairie.

However, local markets cannot absorb all the hogs, beef, and lambs that are produced. Colonies have adopted a variety of strategies to connect with markets. Peace View Colony ships hogs to Vancouver using their own vehi-

cle. The Hutterite driver makes the weekly trip and brings back fruit from British Columbia. Birch Meadows hauls its hogs to Red Deer and broiler chickens to Edmonton, while Grand View ships hogs to a plant in Dawson Creek that supplies stores throughout northern British Columbia. South Peace Colony has faced the problem of distant markets for livestock head-on and has constructed a multi-million-dollar slaughtering and packing facility on the colony. They handle beef, hogs, sheep, and buffalo for the locality. The minister at the Lehrerleut Twilight colony explained that they had made the conscious choice to have their products picked up by the purchasers. This reduced monetary returns but meant that “The boys are not on the road all the time . . . you must not run ahead of the Lord.” One further example illustrates the far-reaching nature of Hutterite market connections. When we visited Clearview Colony, north of the Peace River and arguably one of the most isolated colonies, we found that they were expecting a visit from buyers from Japan. The purity of their honey had so impressed their Vancouver agent that their Japanese clients wanted to visit the colony where bees had no contact with GMOs.

Hutterite agriculture in Alberta is flourishing. The next decade or two will surely see the trends that have been outlined continuing. There will be more colonies, and they will be larger. On the colonies there will be an ongoing process of experimentation and fine-tuning of technology to meet their needs. Every effort will be made to reduce energy inputs, first in the barns and later in the residences. The use of solar energy and methane gas will become widespread. The provincial government will partner with innovative colonies to encourage them to be early adopters of new developments. The sophisticated web of distribution contracts, which have been described, will be extended.

These trends over the next generation will exacerbate the differences between big, aggressively run colonies and smaller, more traditional and conservative colonies. Here, the preoccupation will be with maintenance and compliance with the law rather than monitoring market trends. This increasing diversity among colonies in the economic sphere matches the developments in the social and cultural life of the Brethren that form such an important theme of Janzen and Stanton’s book.<sup>50</sup>

One area where we can expect to see marked expansion in Hutterite agriculture will be in horticulture. Over the past decades there has been a shift in how colonies manage the surplus of their prolific gardens. At first they gave away produce as an act of neighborliness. They will say of the good old



**Figure 8.** Hutterite men chat at Crossroads Farmers Market in Calgary, Alberta. Photo by author.

days, “We fed the district.” Gradually locals came to the colonies to buy eggs, chickens, and seasonal vegetables. With the rise of farmers’ markets, a majority of colonies became involved, and trucks left the colonies for destinations in both small towns and major cities (Figure 8). As the public has become more and more concerned with “eating locally,” with organic products, and with forging links with producers, so the Hutterites have been able to capitalize on their image as old-world, earthy, “peasant” producers. They have a great reputation and brand name—in spite of the fact that they are actually using all the science and technology available to them. Some colonies have gone a step further and have established contracts to supply wholesalers.<sup>51</sup> Because no single colony can supply a full range of vegetables over a season, groups of



colonies are coming together to avoid competition and to specialize in particular items so that they can supply produce over longer periods.<sup>52</sup> Thus the garden, originally cultivated to ensure that the colony had plenty of vegetables all year round, has become a valued source of financial returns. Expansion in this area would be a good fit for smaller colonies where territorial expansion is not feasible. Some are already experimenting with greenhouses, not only to germinate seeds in the spring, but also for producing tomatoes, cucumbers, and even melons.<sup>53</sup>

Success in this area has not been without its problems. The stalls at farmers' markets have to be staffed, and young women often perform these tasks. Some ministers regard this as a dangerous new exposure to "the world."<sup>54</sup> Competition between colonies for the busiest markets has become another problem, while the investment in time and resources must be weighed against returns. Some colonies drive more than one hundred fifty kilometers to their chosen locations.

This rosy outlook could be disrupted. The larger, more aggressive colonies of today are exposed as never before to environmental and economic vagaries. The Brethren have moved a long way from the image of the Hutterite ark serenely sailing over the worldly sea. How will they weather the next prolonged drought or growing consumer fads that might reduce demand for meat and milk? Their very successes, and the fact that they have longer to prepare to establish a daughter colony, has made it harder for leaders to impose an ascetic way of life in order to save for the next generation. Although defections have by no means reached epidemic proportions, the loss of a handful of key young people could have profound effects. Most worrying of all are the staggering costs of starting a new colony. In addition to buying land and putting up buildings, the parent colony has to pay millions of dollars to buy quotas for eggs, milk, and broiler chickens. The total cost of these quotas could easily exceed \$50 million. One informant said that it was going to take twenty-six years to pay off their debts incurred when founding a daughter colony.

Hutterite agriculture makes a considerable and growing contribution to agricultural production in Alberta. They have proved remarkably adaptable and are innovators in some branches of agricultural technology. Their success has been based on the large pool of labor, which allows them to pursue diversified mixed farming, and on their ability to accumulate capital for expansion by pursuing a culture of austerity. In turn, these attributes rest on the foundation of their faith and their communal lifestyle. "The Hutterite Way" demands surrender of the self to the building of Christ's kingdom here on earth. This



vision has sustained them for four hundred years, and in spite of looming threats, it appears to be set fair for another generation.

## NOTES

I am most grateful to my colleague Peter Peller, who has, as usual, provided invaluable help in the writing and preparation of this paper, and to Robin Poitras, cartographer at the Geography Department of the University of Calgary, who prepared the final copies of several of the maps. Finally, many thanks to the leaders of the Hutterite colonies I visited for their help and hospitality.

1. The Hutterites often use the analogy of a beehive to describe their life in a colony. See John A. Hostetler, *Hutterite Society* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), 37.

2. Frederick Philip Grove, *Settlers of the Marsh* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1925); *Fruits of the Earth* (Toronto: Dent, 1933); Martha Ostenso, *Wild Geese* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1925); Sinclair Ross, *As for Me and My House* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1957).

3. Rod Janzen and Max Stanton, *The Hutterites in North America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), xiv. In his preface Rod Janzen contrasts the relatively short lives of other religious communal organizations. For additional work on the long history of the Hutterites, see Hostetler, *Hutterite Society*; and John Hofer, *The History of the Hutterites* (Winnipeg: W. K. Printer's Aid, 1982).

4. Acts 2:44; and Victor Peters, *All Things Common: The Hutterite Way of Life* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1965).

5. Donald B. Kraybill and Carl Desportes Bowman, *On the Backroad to Heaven: Old Order Hutterites, Mennonites, Amish, and Brethren* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001).

6. For descriptions and numerous illustrations of Hutterite colonies, see Simon M. Evans and Peter Peller, "Hutterite Colonies and the Cultural Landscape: An Inventory of Selected Site Characteristics," *Journal of Amish and Plain Anabaptist Studies* 4, no. 1 (Spring 2015): 51–81.

7. Peters, *All Things Common*, 116–18; Victor Peters, "The Process of Colony Division among the Hutterians: A Case Study," *International Review of Modern Sociology* 6, no. 1, (Spring 1976): 57–64; and Janzen and Stanton, *Hutterites in North America*, 235–40.

8. For more on this significant demographic development, see Simon M. Evans and Peter Peller, "A Brief History of Hutterite Demography," *Great Plains Quarterly* 35, no. 1 (Winter 2015): 79–101.

9. Janzen and Stanton, *Hutterites in North America*, esp. Chpt. 4, "Four Hutterite Branches."

10. Rod Janzen, *The Prairie People: Forgotten Anabaptists* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1999).

11. Simon M. Evans and Peter Peller, "The Hutterites Come to Alberta," *Alberta History* 63, no. 4 (Autumn 2015): 11–19.

12. For a sympathetic account of this bitter split, see Janzen and Stanton, *Hutterites in North America*, 62–73.

13. For the legal case, which the Hutterites eventually lost, see "Hutterites Lose Photo Battle," *Calgary Herald*, July 25, 2009; and "Public Safety Trumps Belief," *Calgary Herald*, July 26, 2009. The significance of the dispute was evaluated by Margaret H. Ogilvie, "The Failure of Proportionality Tests to Protect Christian Minorities in Western Democracies: *Alberta v. Hutterian Brethren of Wilson Siding*," *Ecclesiastical Law Journal* 12, no. 2 (May 2010): 208–14. For the advertisement see Andy, Kurt, and Shawn Wipf of Viking Colony on the back of

*Alberta Views* (July/Aug. 2009).

14. Janzen and Stanton, *Hutterites in North America*, 33–45; and Hofer, *The History of the Hutterites*, 58–61.

15. Duane C. S. Stoltzfus, *Pacifists in Chains: The Persecution of the Hutterites during the Great War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013).

16. For a copy of the Communal Property Act and a summary of the historical context see, Alberta, Select Committee of the Assembly, *Report on Communal Property, 1972* (Edmonton: Queen's Printer, 1972).

17. For the implications of the legislation to Hutterite settlement patterns, see Simon M. Evans, "The Hutterites in Alberta: Past and Present Settlement Patterns," in *Essays on the Historical Geography of the Canadian West: Regional Perspectives on the Settlement Process*, ed. L. A. Rosenvall and S. M. Evans, 145–71 (Calgary: University of Calgary, Department of Geography, 1987).

18. Simon M. Evans, "Some Factors Shaping the Expansion of Hutterite Colonies in Alberta Since the Repeal of the Communal Property Act in 1973," *Canadian Ethnic Studies Journal* 45, no. 1/2 (2013): 203–36.

19. Gertrude Huntington, "Living in the Ark: Four Centuries of Hutterite Faith and Community," in *America's Communal Utopias*, ed. Donald E. Pitzer, 319–51 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).

20. See, for example, Bron B. Ingoldsby, "The Hutterite Family in Transition," *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 32, no. 3 (Summer 2001): 377–92; and *The Nine, Hutterites: Our Story to Freedom* (Kearney, NE: Rising Son Publishing, 2013).

21. For example, R. C. Cook, "The North American Hutterites: A Study in Human Multiplication," *Population Bulletin* 10 (Dec. 1954): 97–107; Anna Pluzhnikov et al., "Correlation of Intergenerational Family Sizes Suggests a Genetic Component of Reproductive Fitness," *American Journal of Human Genetics* 81, no. 1 (July 2007): 165–69; and Mark Loeb et al., "Effect of Influenza Vaccination of Children on Infection Rates in Hutterite Communities: A Randomized Trial," *JAMA* 303, no. 10 (Mar. 2010): 943–50.

22. Earlier work was summarized in Karl A. Peter, *The Dynamics of Hutterite Society: An Analytical Approach* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1987); more recently a series of articles by Bron Ingoldsby and Suzanne R. Smith have examined various aspects of the Hutterite family. See, for instance, Suzanne R. Smith and Bron Ingoldsby, "The Role of Discipline in Hutterite Child Rearing," *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal* 37, no. 3 (Mar. 2009): 284–97. This article cites several of their other works.

23. Kraybill and Bowman, *On the Backroad to Heaven*.

24. Janzen and Stanton, *Hutterites in North America*, xiv.

25. Analysis has to be limited to a single ecological and political regime. While Hutterite agriculture throughout North America is framed by the same belief system, the details are very different. For example, colonies in Canada adjust their strategies to maximize benefits from supply management arrangements for milk, poultry, and eggs. Colonies in neighboring Montana, in the United States, respond to federal land management initiatives.

26. John W. Bennett, *Hutterian Brethren: The Agricultural Economy and Social Organization of a Communal People* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967), 162.

27. This has often resulted in resentment. Relations between Hutterites and their rural neighbors are reviewed in Simon M. Evans, "Some Factors Shaping the Expansion of Hutterite Colonies."

28. Janzen and Stanton, *The Hutterites in North America*; and Yossi Katz and John Lehr, *Inside the Ark: The Hutterites in Canada and the United States* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre Press, 2012).

29. Hostetler, *Hutterite Society*.

30. Bennett, *Hutterian Brethren*.

31. John Ryan, *The Agricultural Economy of Manitoba Hutterite Colonies* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1977); see also Janzen and Stanton, *The Hutterites in North America*, Chpt. 9.

32. Statistics Canada and product marketing boards will not isolate data on Hutterite production for privacy reasons. A special tabulation was obtained from Statistics Canada by the *Vancouver Sun* in 1993, but our request for similar coverage was denied. "Alberta's Hutterites Threatened with Limits to Growth of Farms," *Vancouver Sun*, Apr. 8, 2000.

33. Simon M. Evans, "The Dispersal of Hutterite Colonies in Alberta, 1918–1971: The Spatial Expression of Cultural Identity" (master's thesis, University of Calgary, 1973).

34. Simon M. Evans, "Some Developments in the Diffusion Patterns of Hutterite Colonies," *Canadian Geographer* 29, no. 4 (Dec. 1985): 327–39.

35. Statistics Canada, 2011 Census. By 2015, this number had grown to 188 colonies. Jake Stahl, *The Original Hutterite Telephone and Address Book, 2015* (Saskatoon: Riverview Colony, 2015).

36. These figures are based on the assumption that the average size of colonies in Alberta was twelve thousand acres. See Sharon Barker, "Understanding Business on a Colony: A Syndicated Survey of Farm Bosses" (Calgary: Blacksheep Strategy Inc., 2010).

37. *Report on Communal Property, 1972*, appendix E.

38. Simon M. Evans, "Alberta Hutterite Colonies: An Exploration of Past, Present and Future Settlement Patterns," *Communal Societies* 30, no. 2 (2010): 57.

39. Hutterites owned 607,500 hectares of 21 million hectares of farmland in the province and produced \$344 million of the \$7.9 billion gross farm receipts. See "Alberta's Hutterites threatened with limits on growth of farms," *Vancouver Sun*, Apr. 8, 2000.

40. In Montana, Hutterites produce more than 90 percent of the state's hogs and 98 percent of its eggs. In South Dakota, 50–60 percent of the state's hogs are raised on Hutterite colonies. Janzen and Stanton, *Hutterites in North America*, 212.

41. "Planning Approval of New Plant," *Macleod Gazette*, Oct. 29, 2014; "Extended Hours for Plant," *Macleod Gazette*, Feb. 25, 2015.

42. *Clareholm Local Press*, Feb. 8, 2017; *The Signal* (Rycroft), Sept. 2, 2014; and *Alaska Highway News*, Aug. 18, 2016.

43. Four of these colonies were visited during the summer of 2016 for the purposes of this study, and the one in the Peace Country was visited in 2013.

44. Interestingly, the minister explained in 2013 that a neighbor was asking \$500,000 for one hundred sixty acres that the Hutterites wanted to round out their land.

45. *Report on Communal Property 1972*, 8. The Communal Property Act was repealed in Mar. 1973 because it conflicted with the provincial bill of rights.

46. Egg Farmers of Alberta, personal communication with research director, July 17, 2016; and "How Does an Egg Farm Work?" *Calgary Herald*, Oct. 26, 2013.

47. Donald B. Kraybill, Karen M. Johnson-Weiner, and Steven M. Nolt, *The Amish* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013), 293ff. There is a small-scale but widespread black market. Women knit and crochet articles that are sold to tourists.

48. Janzen's emphasizes that, although women may not have a formal presence on the colony management committee, they exert considerable indirect influence. He also points out that Hutterite women are often better read than male Hutterites and that they are playing a growing role in Hutterite education. Janzen and Stanton, *Hutterites in North America*, 219–26; see also Bron S. Ingoldsby, "The Hutterite Family in Transition."

49. Karl A. Peter, *Dynamics of Hutterite Society* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1987), 160ff. He remarks, "unemployed and idle young men are a source of social problems, undermining the social order of the community."

50. Janzen and Stanton, *Hutterites in North America*, 5.

51. Products marked with the brand name "Hutterite Gardens" are available at my local co-op in Calgary.

52. Thirteen colonies in southern Saskatchewan are pursuing this experiment.

53. Colony visits, Sandhills and Grande View; and Janzen and Stanton, *Hutterites in North America*, 211.

54. Urban farmers' markets are usually open on Sundays, and the colonies employ non-Hutterites to open their stalls on a limited basis.

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