

Kristin Lems

FARMER

I AM A FAR - MER BEEN ONE ALL MY LIFE — CALL ME A
 FAR - MER NOT A FARMER'S WIFE — THE PLOUGH AND HOE LEFT THEIR PATTERN ON MY
 HAND — AND NOW THEY TELL ME THIS IS NOT MY LAND — THIS IS MY LAND —

1. I am a farmer, been one all my life.
Call me a farmer not a farmer's wife.
The plough and hoe left their pattern on my hand
And now they tell me this is not my land.
2. We raised two children; they are farmers too.
A crop and garden every year we grew.
Two hundred acres ain't no easy haul
But it's a good life, no regrets at all.
3. When Joe turned 50, his back was acting up.
We three took over, so's he could rest up;
My Joe was buried where his daddy lies
And soon some men came, askin' for my price.

4. I said, I live here, here I'm gonna stay
What makes you think I wanna move away?
They smiled real sly, said "Now your farmer's
dead;
The farm ain't yours 'til you pay the overhead."
5. I know we women ain't been in the know
But we're no fools as far as farmin' goes.
The crop don't know no woman's work or man's
There ain't no law can take me from my land.
6. Cause I'm a farmer, been one all my life.
Call me a farmer, not a farmer's wife.
The plough and hoe left their patterns on my
hand.
No one can tell me this is not my land.
This is my land.

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John T. Reynolds

Many farm states still have laws stating that a woman must pay a crippling inheritance tax to keep the farm if her husband dies. No such problem exists for the man should she die. If there were ever a true partnership of equals, it's in farming! Farm women in the Midwest have taught us all a great deal -- this song is a tribute to them and their sometimes unconscious feminism, and to the ongoing urgency for the Equal Rights Amendment in the face of so many discriminatory laws!

This song is from the album *Oh Mama!* by Kristin Lems, Carolstdatter Productions, 908 W. California, Urbana, Illinois 61801.