

Koyiyumptewa, Stewart

2003 Interview of Stewart Koyiyumptewa by T. J. Ferguson at Hopi Cultural Preservation Office and in several farm fields in the drainage of Dinnebeto Wash, July 8, 2003.

This interview was conducted looking at historical photographs and relevant information is recorded directly in the image database. After looking at many photographs, Stewart commented that times have changed (p. 6). Now people have full-time jobs with no time to build windbreaks so they are "going away" from this technology. As a result, erosion is increasing. Good farming is a full-time job, requiring the farmer to work from the early morning to sunset. Farmers need to be in their fields to protect melons and beans from coyotes, rabbits, and other animals. When corn develops ears, there are a lot of crows. In two days, crows can destroy an entire crop in a field. Stewart has spent the night in his field with a spotlight to see a porcupine that was eating his crop. He chased this animal with his truck and shot it. Bears sometimes come into fields.

You start with a small field, over time when the wind blows the sand migrates, allowing you to shift the field. Stewart learned this from his grandfather (p. 7).

At Hotvela gardens, no one waters during ceremonies (p. 19).

Brush windbreaks also helped to capture blowing snow (p. 20).

Early corn is planted in Hotvela Garden for use in Home Dance (p. 20).

In the afternoon, Stewart took me to the 13 acre field he plants with his uncle in Dinnebeto Wash (pp. 21-23). They have planted white and blue corn here since the 1980s. They use a tractor for most of the field but still plant one area by hand. Because of the drought, they are currently planting corn 7 steps apart along a row rather than the normal 5 steps. The rows of corn are still five steps apart. They plant a handful of seeds and then thin a clump to about 8 plants. The stalks they pull out of the ground are placed on the windward side to protect the plants. This field is watered from the runoff of a drainage that makes the topography uneven. The uneven area is the part planted by hand. There is a roasting pit at a house about a half mile to the north. This field is outside District 6. They also plant sweet corn at this field, sometimes using commercial seed. As we walked along the rows of corn, Stewart was pulling weeds. His neighbor plants beans. Stewart said, "You need to take care of plants like they are your children, visit and talk to them. It comes from your heart. It's a lot of work being a farmer."

We then went to a second field by the Dinnebeto Wash which is not doing well this year because of the drought. The field is fed by water from an arroyo. In rainy years this field does better.

We then were to a third field in the Dinnebeto Wash, this year planted in corn. They usually plant beans as well. there are peach trees at the edge of the field. Earthen berms at this field are used to control water and retain it on the field. This year, the moisture is

more than two feet deeper than it usually is, requiring a hole too deep to plant. Stewart notes that the pattern of fruit trees next to corn and bean fields is visible in many of the historic photographs we examined.

We then went to the Hotvela Gardens where religious offerings were observed in the spring, and several photographs were taken.