



## In a Pickle: A Family Farm Story

*By Jerry Apps*

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## **In a Pickle: A Family Farm Story** By Jerry Apps Bibliography

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## **Editorial Review**

From [Booklist](#)

\*Starred Review\* Apps, a veteran Wisconsin author of rural fiction and nonfiction, proves once again just how charming he can be. Set in 1955, this warmhearted novel tells the story of 25-year-old Andy Meyer, a veteran of the Korean War, who has returned home to Link Lake, where he works on his father's farm and, during the summer cucumber season, manages the H. H. Harlow Pickle Company's factory. Life in Link Lake has gone on pretty much the same for generations, but big changes are afoot: Harlow is encouraging local cucumber farmers to plant bigger fields, to use more modern equipment, and to enter into exclusive contracts with the company. When spot-rot hits a local cucumber farm and spreads to other, smaller patches, farmers are suddenly unable to sell their cukes; families whose heads are barely above water are in danger of sinking; and Andy finds not only his livelihood, but also his very way of life in jeopardy. This is one of those slice-of-life novels that utterly wins us over with rich characters, homespun dialogue, and a story that, although it takes place half a century ago, involves a subject that's still current: the elimination of small farms by big agribusiness. Apps, who was born on a farm and who managed a pickle factory in the 1950s, invests the novel with the kind of realism, precise detail, and local color that only someone who had lived the story could do. Pitt, David

### **Review**

" "In a Pickle" tells this poignant story of change, family, and heartache in a nostalgic, yet unforgettable way." -- Oscar Mireles, editor of "I Didn't Know There Were Latinos in Wisconsin"

" "In a Pickle" is a many-layered pleasure delivered by a master craftsman who is also, like Studs Terkel and Howard Zinn, a passionate student of the people's history. As Apps engages us in the coming-of-age saga of the pickle factory manager Andy Meyer, this is at once a lesson in rural Wisconsin sociology, a quietly scathing indictment of factory farming, and a great read." -- John Galligan, author of "The Nail Knot" and "The Blood Knot"

" In 1955, life on the nation's traditional small family farms was on a collision course with industrialization and technology. Small cheese factories were closing, combines were replacing the threshing crew, and workhorses were put out to pasture. It also meant that farm families were facing the traumas of the future. Jerry Apps chronicles this dilemma of change through the lives of central Wisconsin farmers who existed by the sweat of their brows and the muscles in their arms. . . . "In a Pickle" is a story you'll read with relish and remember forever." -- John Oncken, syndicated agriculture columnist and radio commentator

"Apps draws from his own rural upbringing to paint a touching picture of farm life and pickle-making in the sands of Central Wisconsin."--"Wisconsin Natural Resources"

"It's not the first American novel to pit country wisdom against corporate sliminess, but when was the last time a good story taught you this much about the pickle-curing process?"--"The Onion"

"Apps, a veteran Wisconsin author of fiction and nonfiction, proves once again just how charming he can be. . . . This is one of those slice-of-life novels that utterly wins us over with rich characters, homespun dialogue, and a story that, although it takes place half a century ago, involves a subject that's still current: the elimination of small farms by big agribusiness. Apps, who was born on a farm and who managed a pickle factory in the 1950s, invests the novel with the kind of realism, precise detail, and local color that only someone who had lived the story could do."--"Booklist"

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#### About the Author

Jerry Apps is a professor emeritus of agriculture at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

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