



## Agricultural Services

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Why's of Agriculture: Where did the Rural Wave Go?

By Aimee Delaney, Ag Relations

It's something that's been on my mind recently. You used to see it everywhere you went, whether you were a local of the area or not. The Rural Wave. I'm not talking about when a crowd of people stand up and sit down in synchronicity. I'm talking about the friendly hand-waves we'd share with each person we pass while driving the back roads.

For those not used to the rural lifestyle, it's a phenomenon that's baffled many for long. You find yourself in the country and people just start to wave at you. Briefly. Sometimes with only one finger off the wheel as they pass, sometimes with just a slight nod of the head. Did they know you? Was this a case of mistaken identity? Who exactly do they think they're waving at?

Since the dinosaur age, ruralites have made a habit of waving at strangers. They wave from their pick-ups, cars, tractors, and horseback. Perhaps they wave to say hello, or perhaps to signify a helping hand should need be, whatever the case, they wave. The specific reason for the wave can be hard to distinguish, but the impact of the wave is immense. Just as we teach our children to wave as a greeting and to acknowledge another's' presence. It provides a sense of community, courtesy, and acceptance. It's a mutual respect.

Now a days the rural wave seems to be a little less common. As more residents fill the landscape, so do new neighbours and passers-by, many of whom aren't familiar with the rural culture. In the cities, it's not common to see folks wave at each other. Well, there may be a variation of the rural one-finger wave, but I assure you it has a very different intention.

Maybe this is because there's more need for two hands tightly on the wheel in the city? Regardless, this cultural behavior seems to be vastly different from urban life to rural. And with more urban dwellers wanting their own rural piece of heaven, we are seeing a cultural change. While it's okay when cultural behaviors change and adapt to modern times, this is one habit that I hope can persist through these changing tides.



This year I've become a dedicated waver. Join me and take the pledge to become a dedicated waver too! Let's bring back the Rural Wave!

Thanks again for joining me for another 'Why' or in this case 'Where' of Agriculture. If you have any comments, suggestions, or agricultural question you'd like me to dig into for a future article let me know at [adelaney@rdcounty.ca](mailto:adelaney@rdcounty.ca)

Learn more about agricultural life with our Year on the Farm timeline, available at [www.rdcountry.ca/629/A-Year-on-the-Farm](http://www.rdcountry.ca/629/A-Year-on-the-Farm)