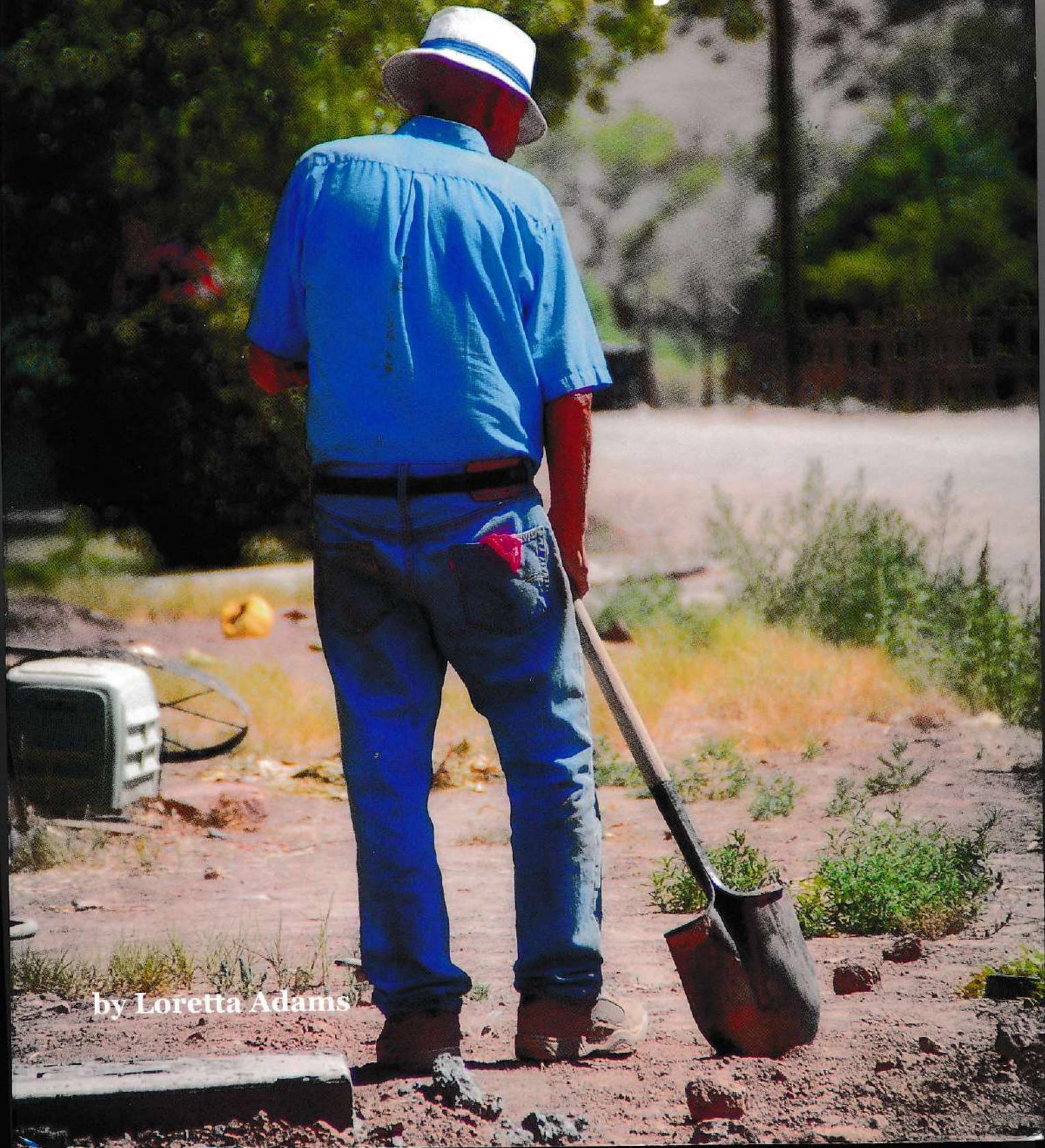


My Father

by Loretta Adams





My Father

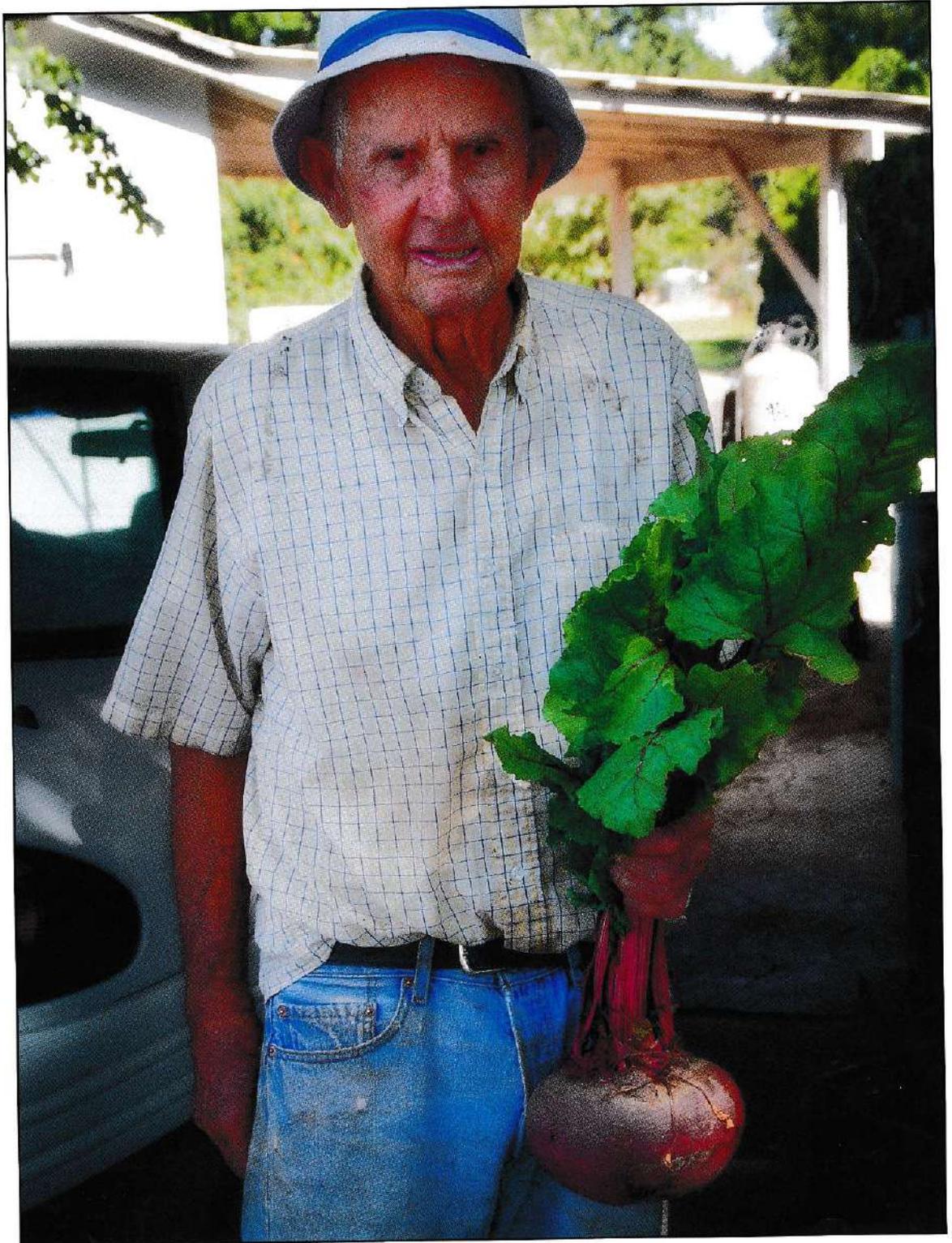
by Loretta Adams

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For the last several years I have been taking pictures of Dad hoping to record what he does in the garden and how he grows the fruit and vegetables that everyone loves. I have many pictures, but I wanted to share my favorites with you.

While taking these pictures I made several discoveries about my father. I discovered that my father has strong hands, which clean and cut vegetables. Yet, he has nurturing hands, which gently plant tomatoes. My father's hands fix irrigation systems, cut cabbage, peppers, and lettuce from the garden, and clip grapes from the vine. They clean cultivator blades and weed rows in the garden. His hands hoe, irrigate, and drive the tractor.

I also discovered how flexible Dad is. I am amazed at how he can bend parallel to weed the onions or to find just the right size cabbage to pick. His back is like a table. I have always been impressed with my father's knowledge of gardening. He likes to grow different kinds of vegetables like corn, which is not supposed to do well in Santa Clara's warm climate. Yet over the past few years he has successfully grown good corn. This year he did not spray for worms, so the corn was spread out under a table under the tree. He checked each ear for worms, cut off the wormy parts, and threw the ears in a box to sell. When a fruit stand customer said the corn was good, but the ears small, Dad said, "You can have large ears of wormy corn or small ears without worms."

Lettuce is another vegetable meant for cooler climates, yet every winter the family enjoys lettuce, spinach, and carrots. Mom once said about Dad's winter garden, "I don't know why he plants it. He just lets it go to waste. I think he plants it just to watch it grow." I do, too. There is a need in my father to plant, grow, and harvest. He sees a beauty in green growing things and in sharing his food with family, friends and fruit stand customers. A farmer defines who he is. In late summer or early fall he checks out the tractor and gets ready to cultivate the soil for a new summer garden.

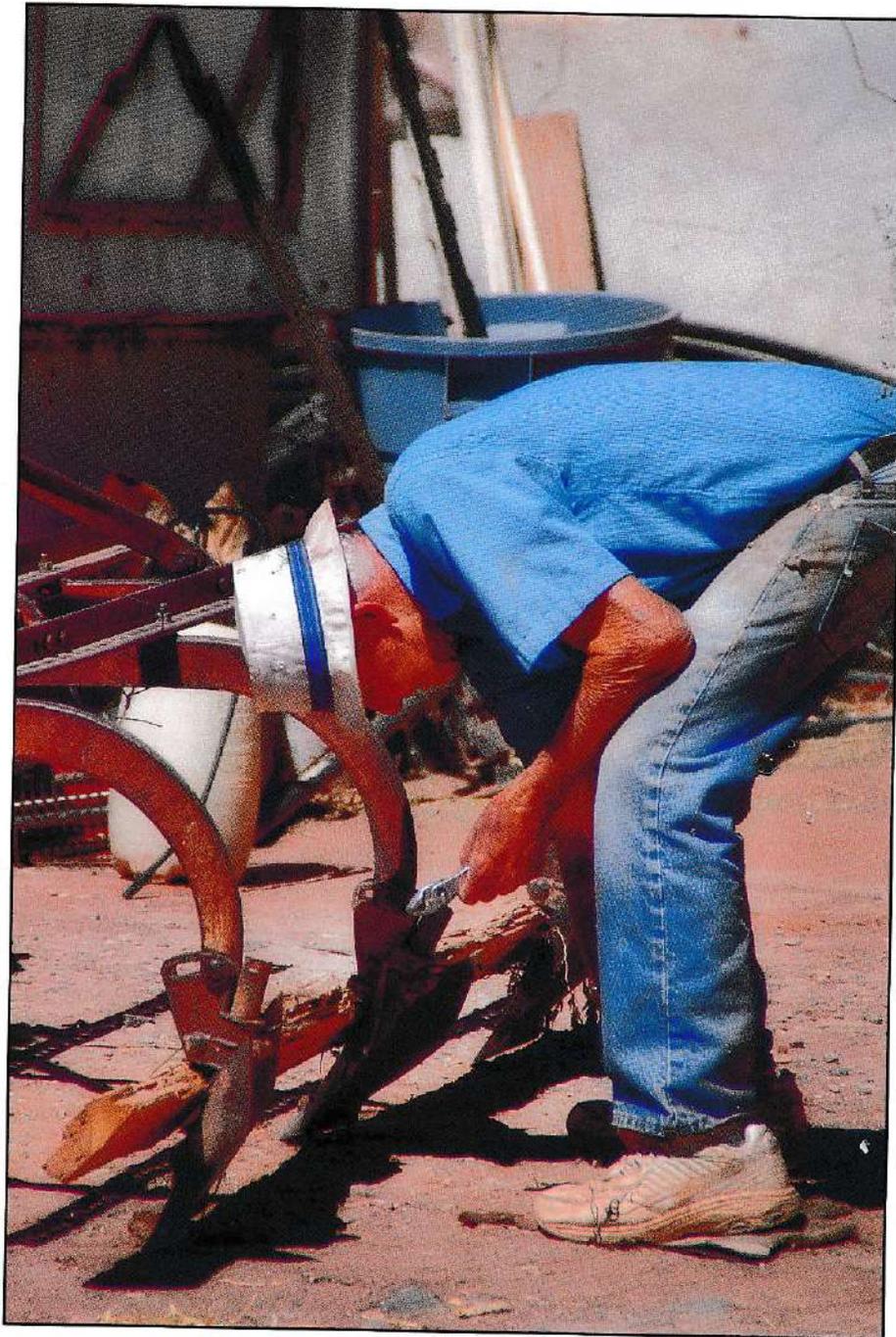
People love looking at Dad's garden, and when they ask whose garden it is, I proudly say, "It's my dad's, and he's ninety one, and usually you can see him. He will be planting, irrigating, picking vegetables, or riding on his tractor. Of course, he doesn't look ninety one, and he isn't, only in man-made calendar years."

Loretta, 2007



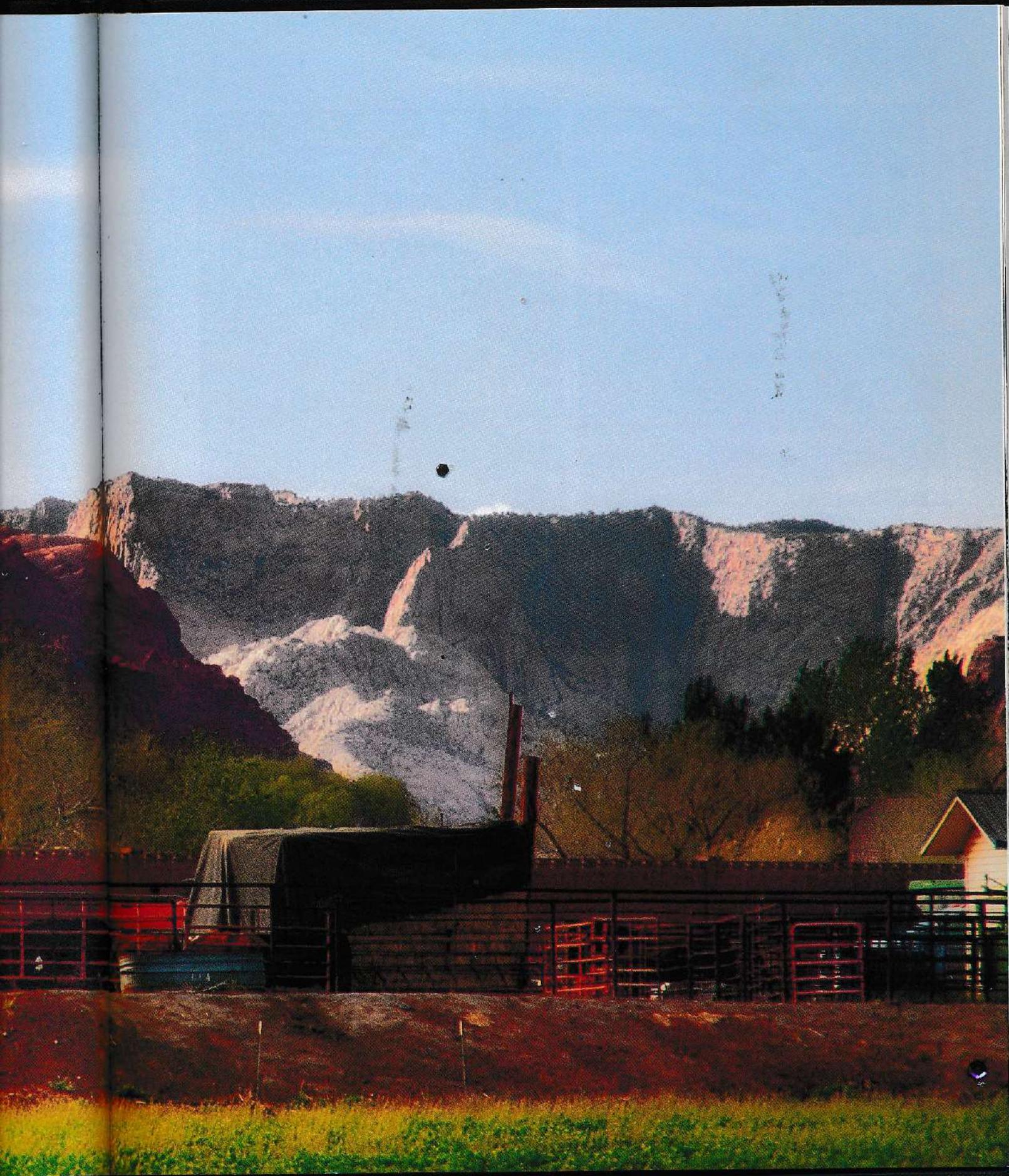


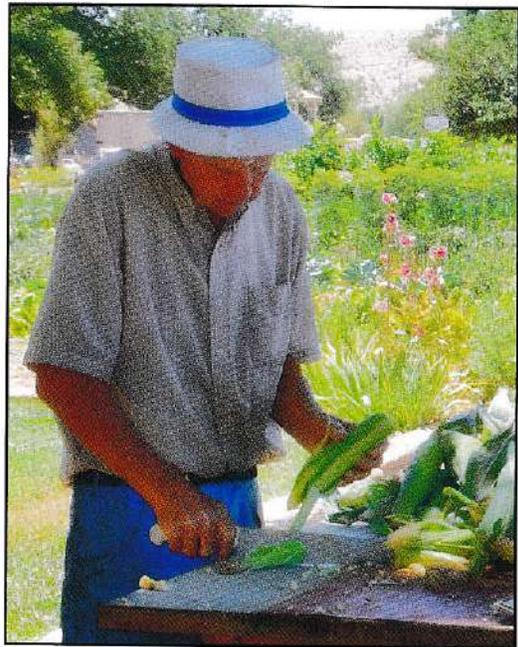
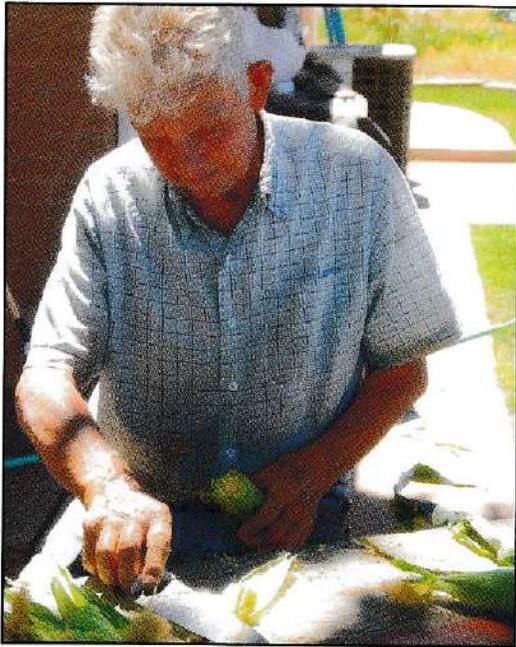


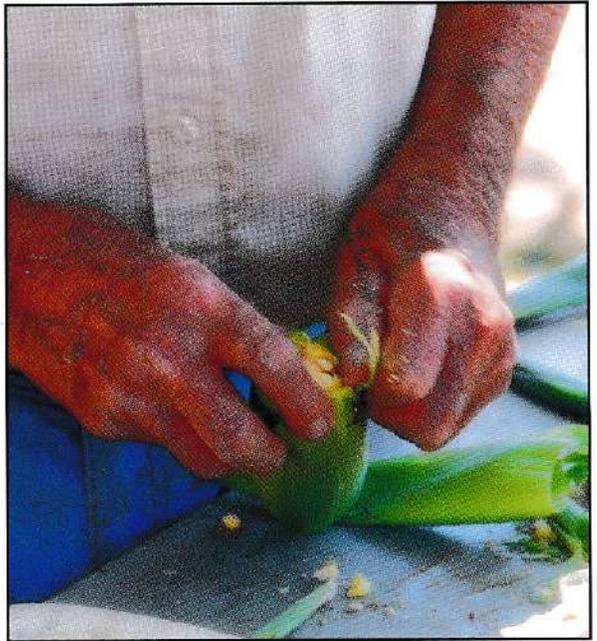
















My father doesn't look at the calendar
to see that it's spring.

He smells the air,

picks up a clod

rich in clay

and rubs it

through his fingers.

He knows before spring does
that its spring.

He pulls down a tree branch and
runs his fingers across it.

eyes tell, too.

He wouldn't have to look;
rhythms born out of time,

He works his hands

through rich full clay

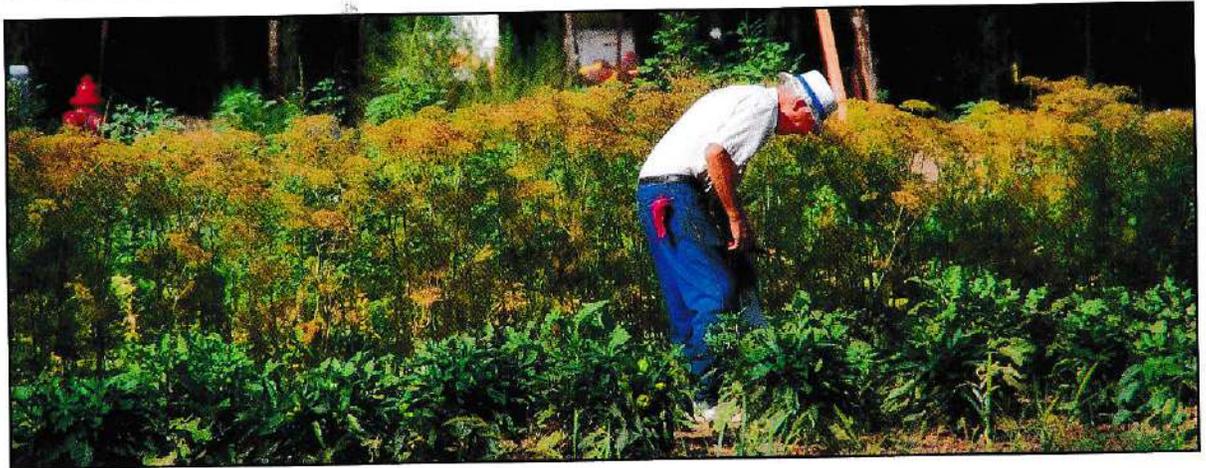
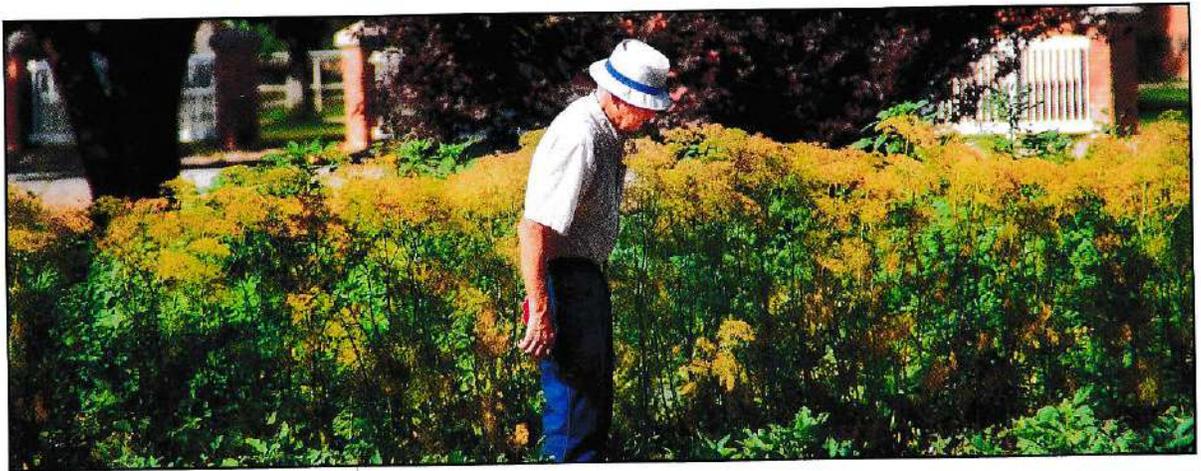
as his shadow covers the land.

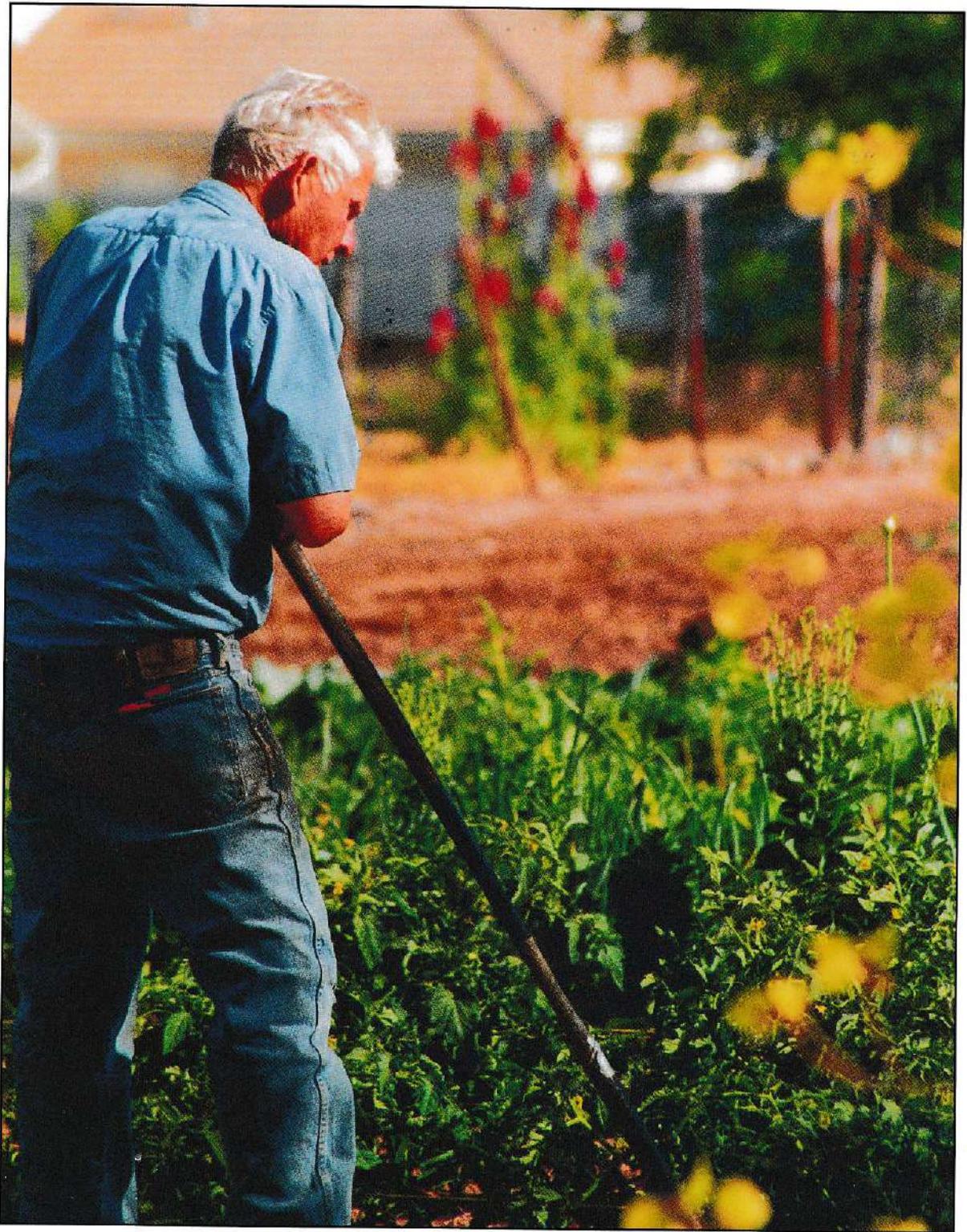


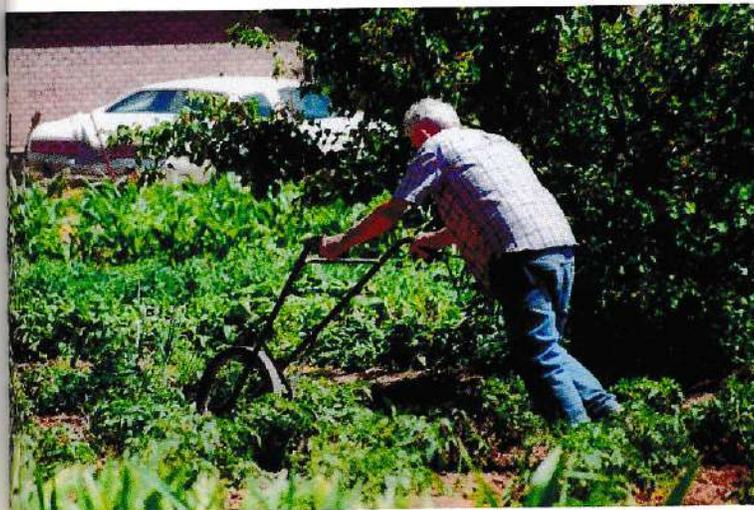
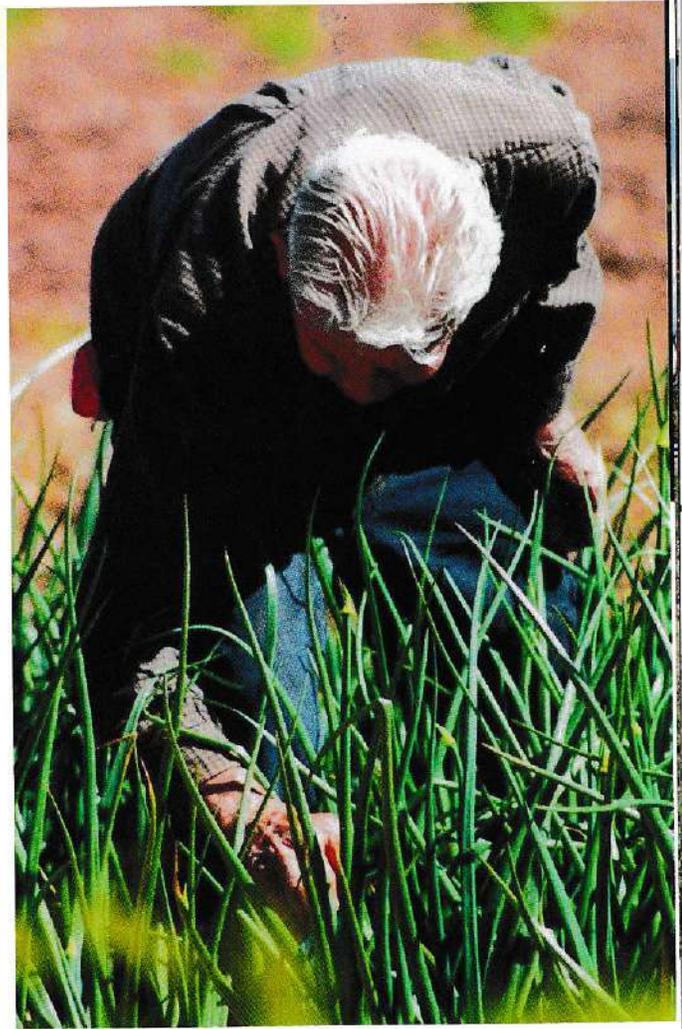
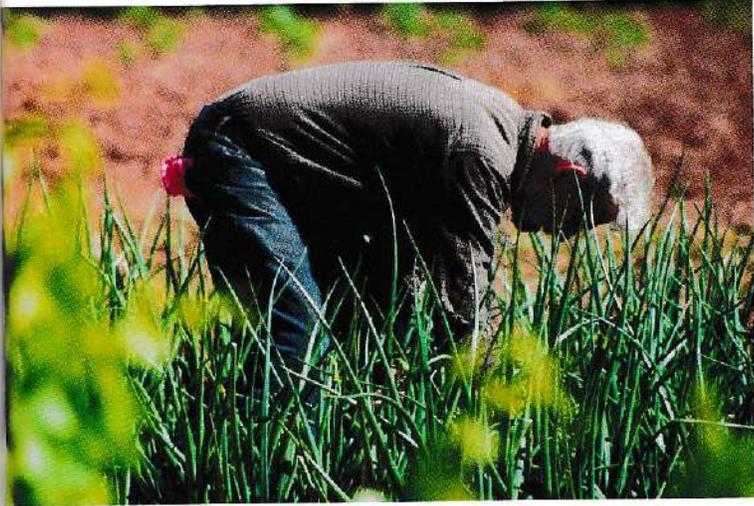




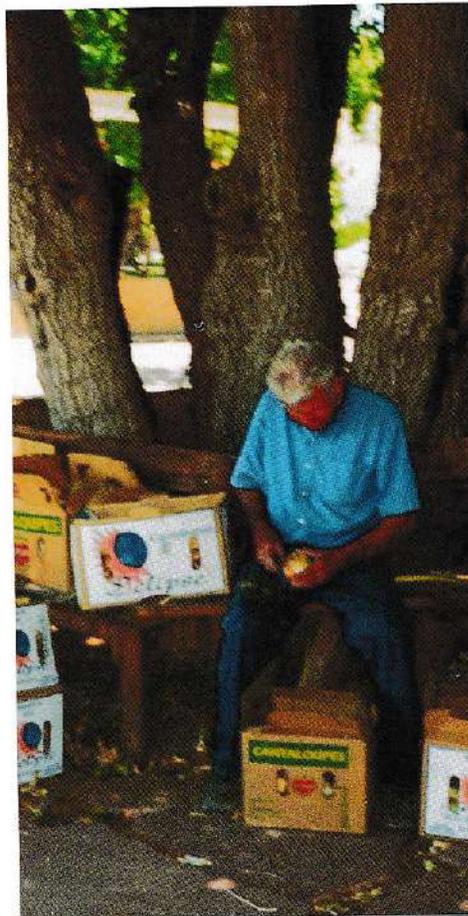
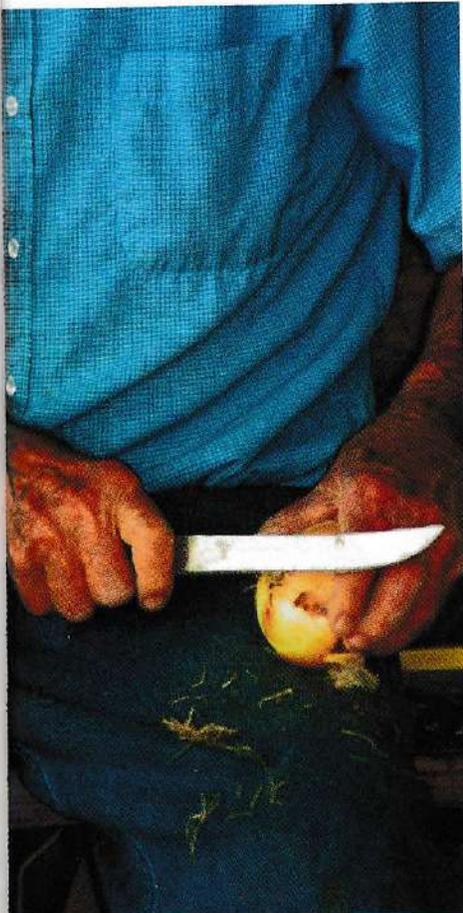
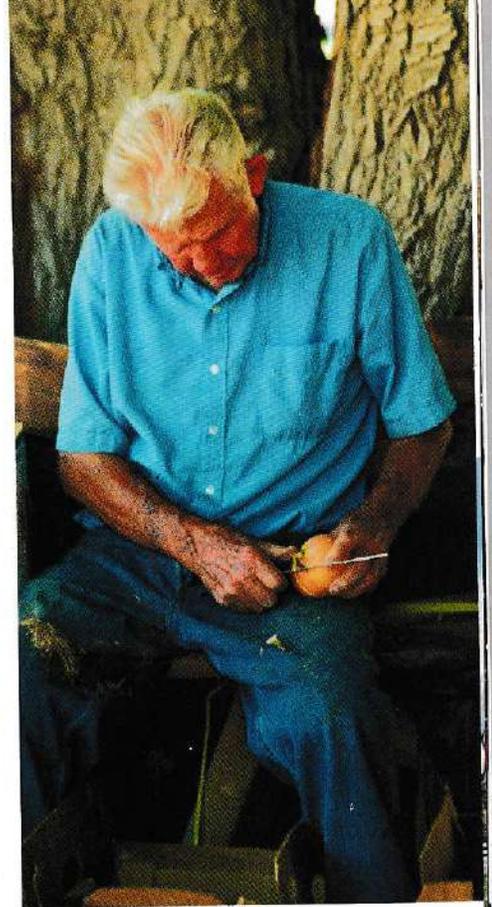
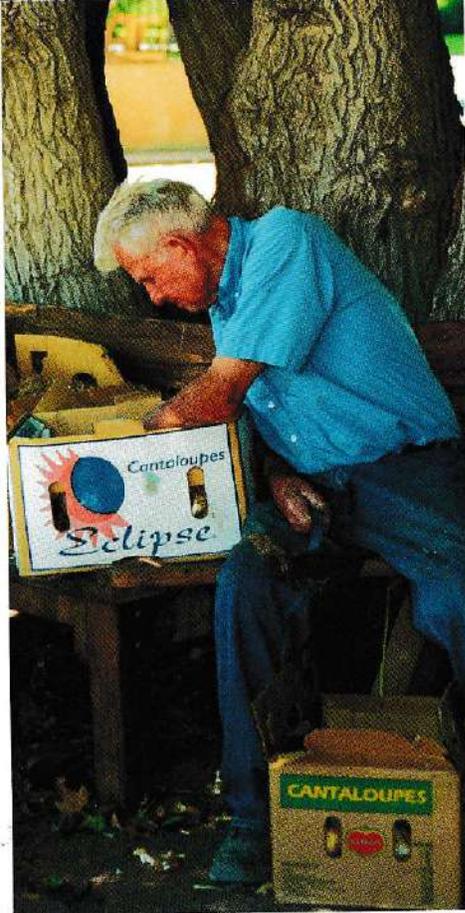
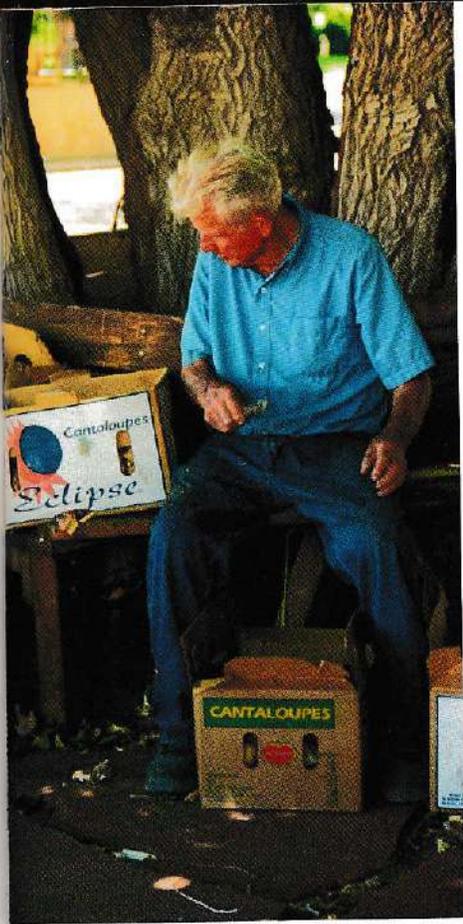




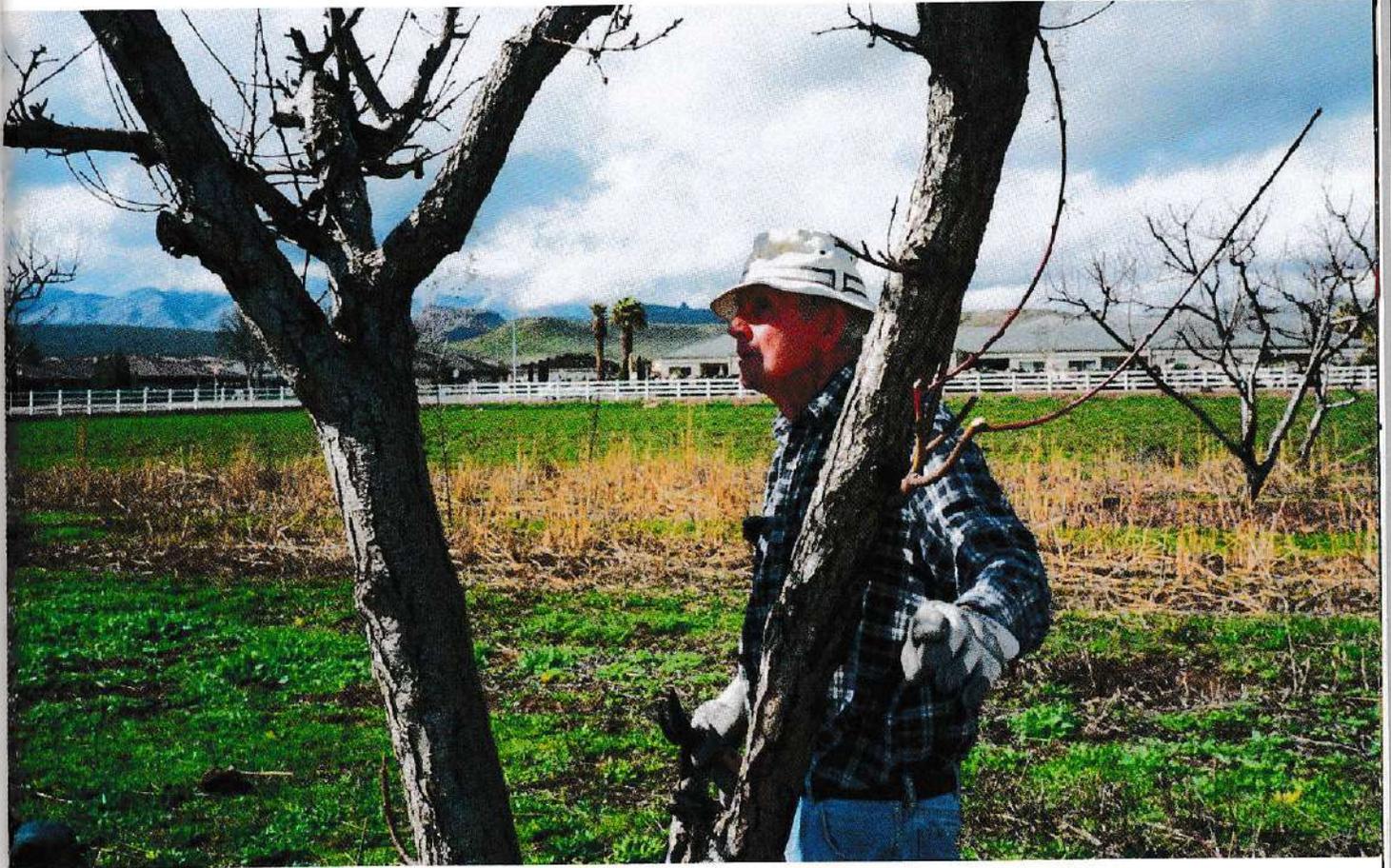


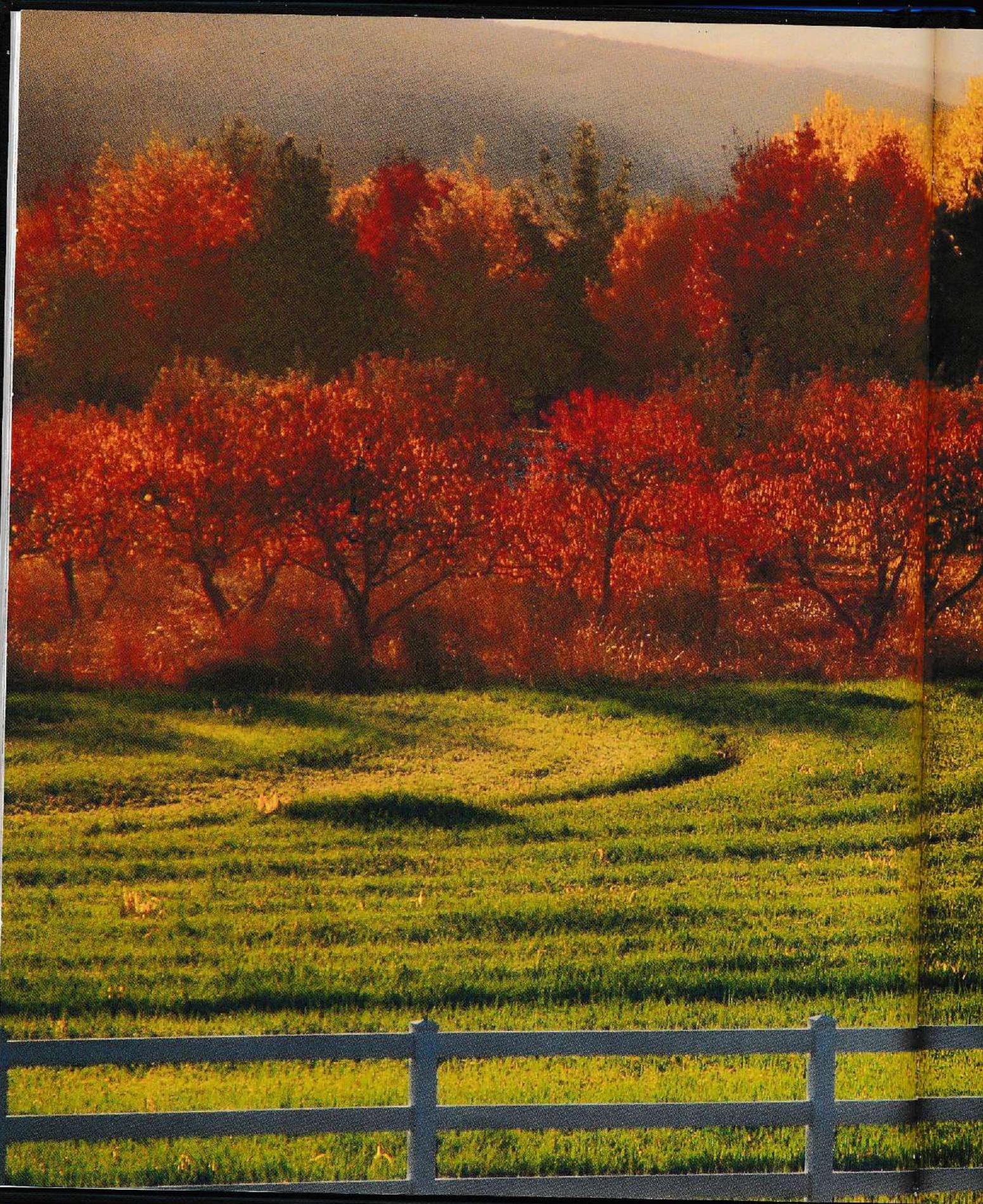


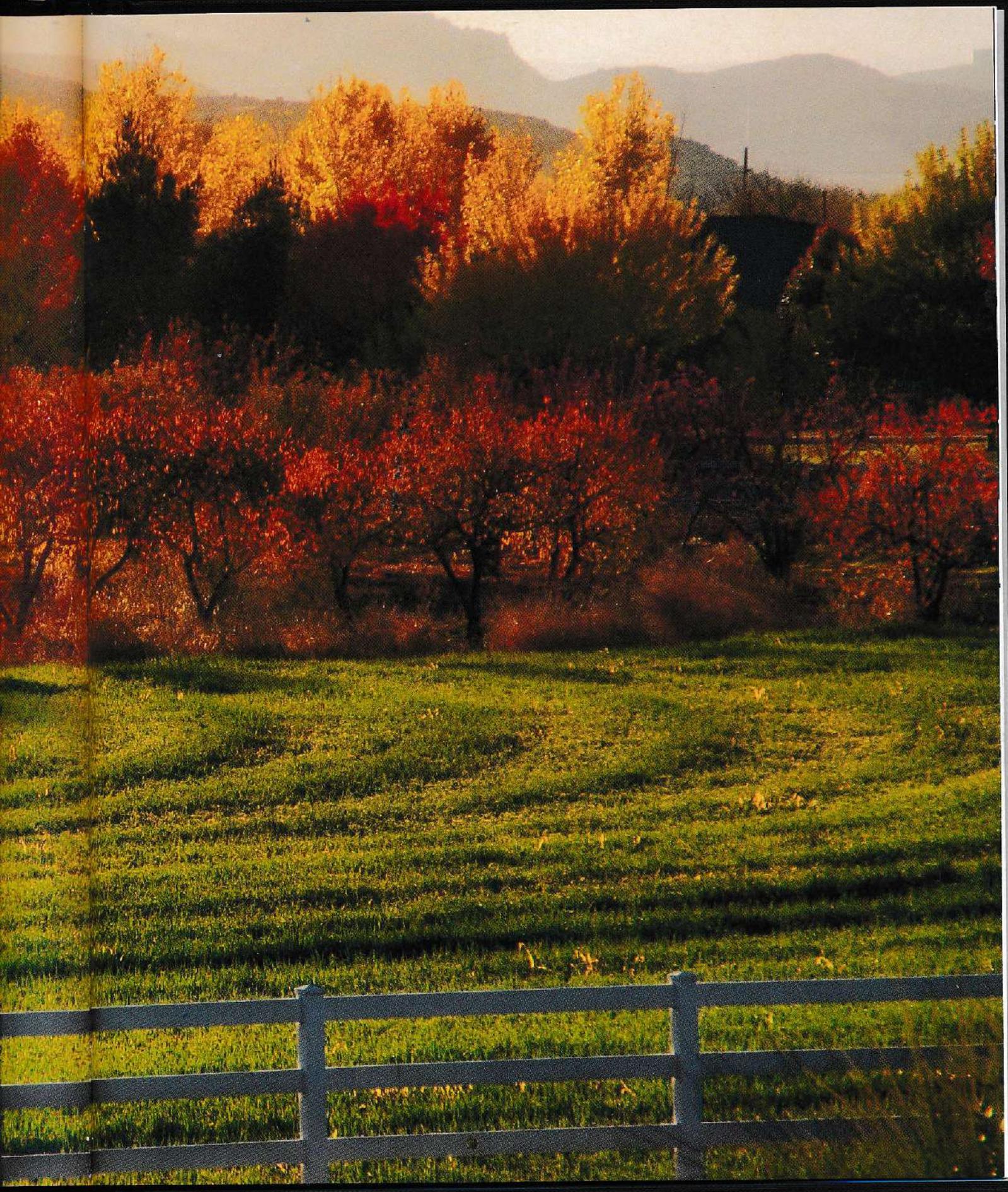


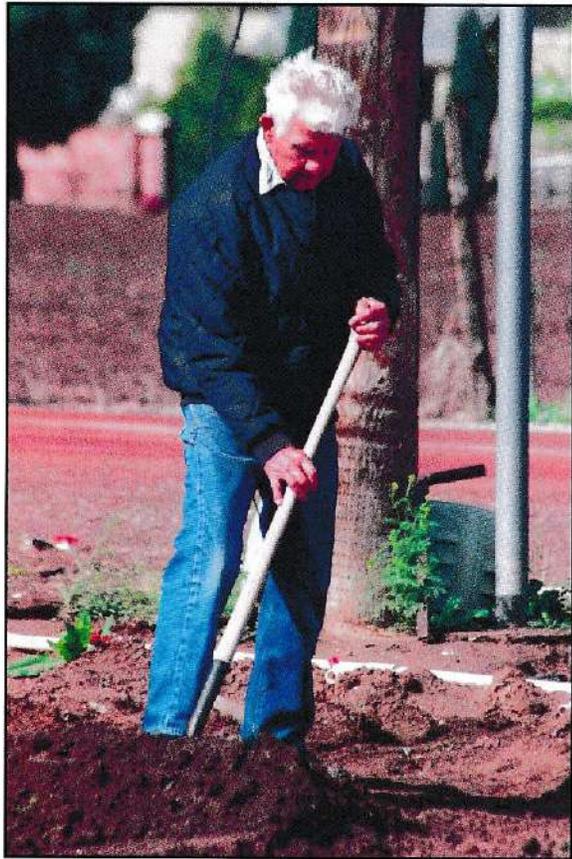
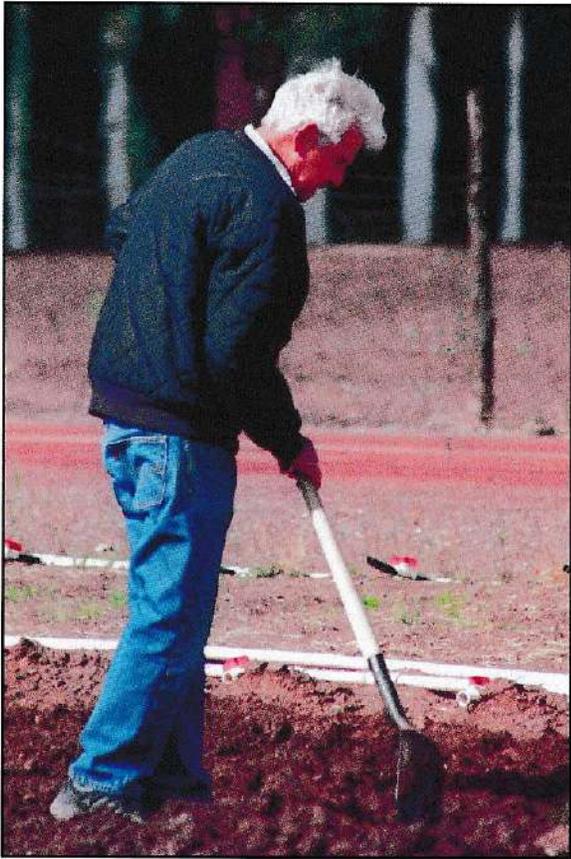




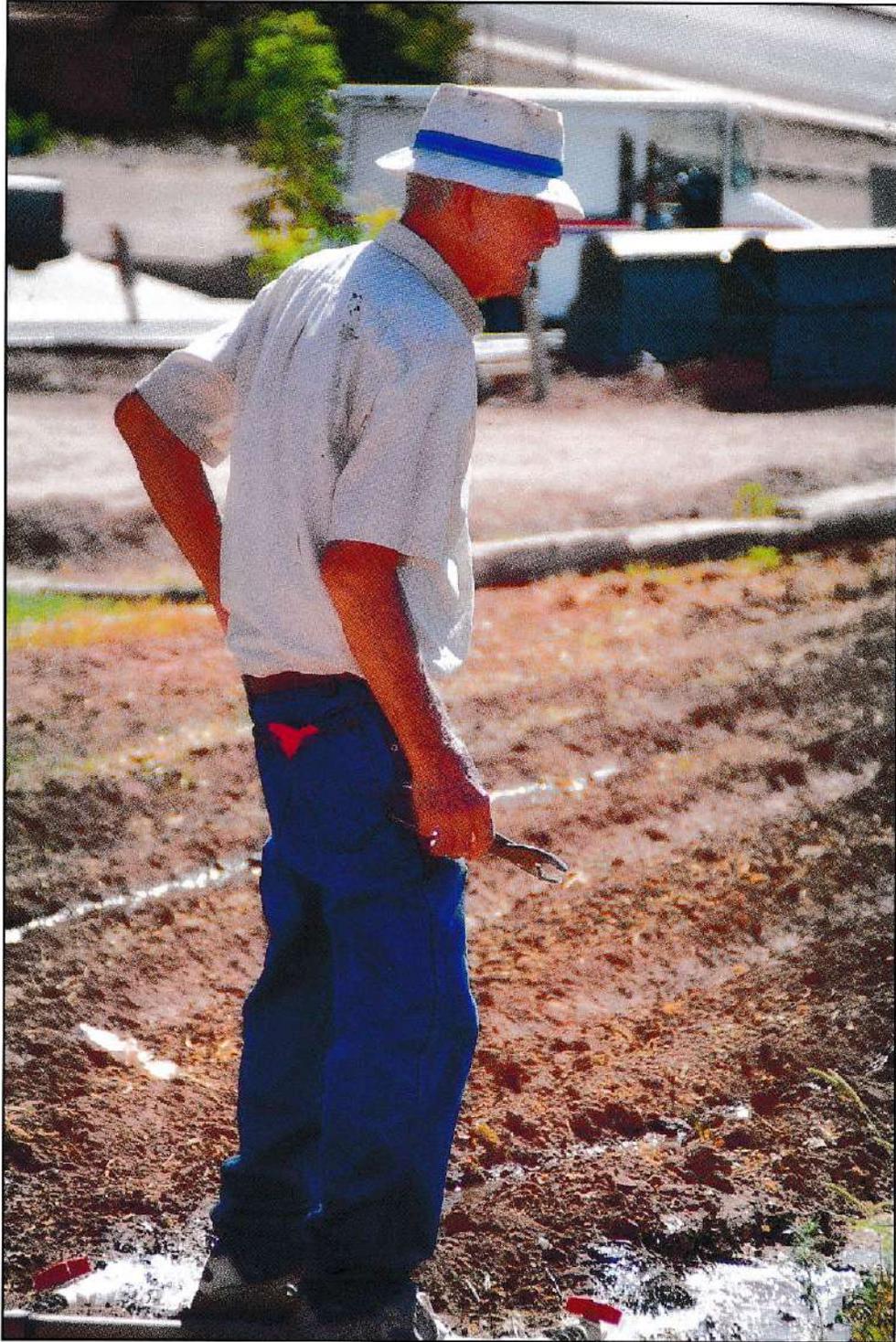


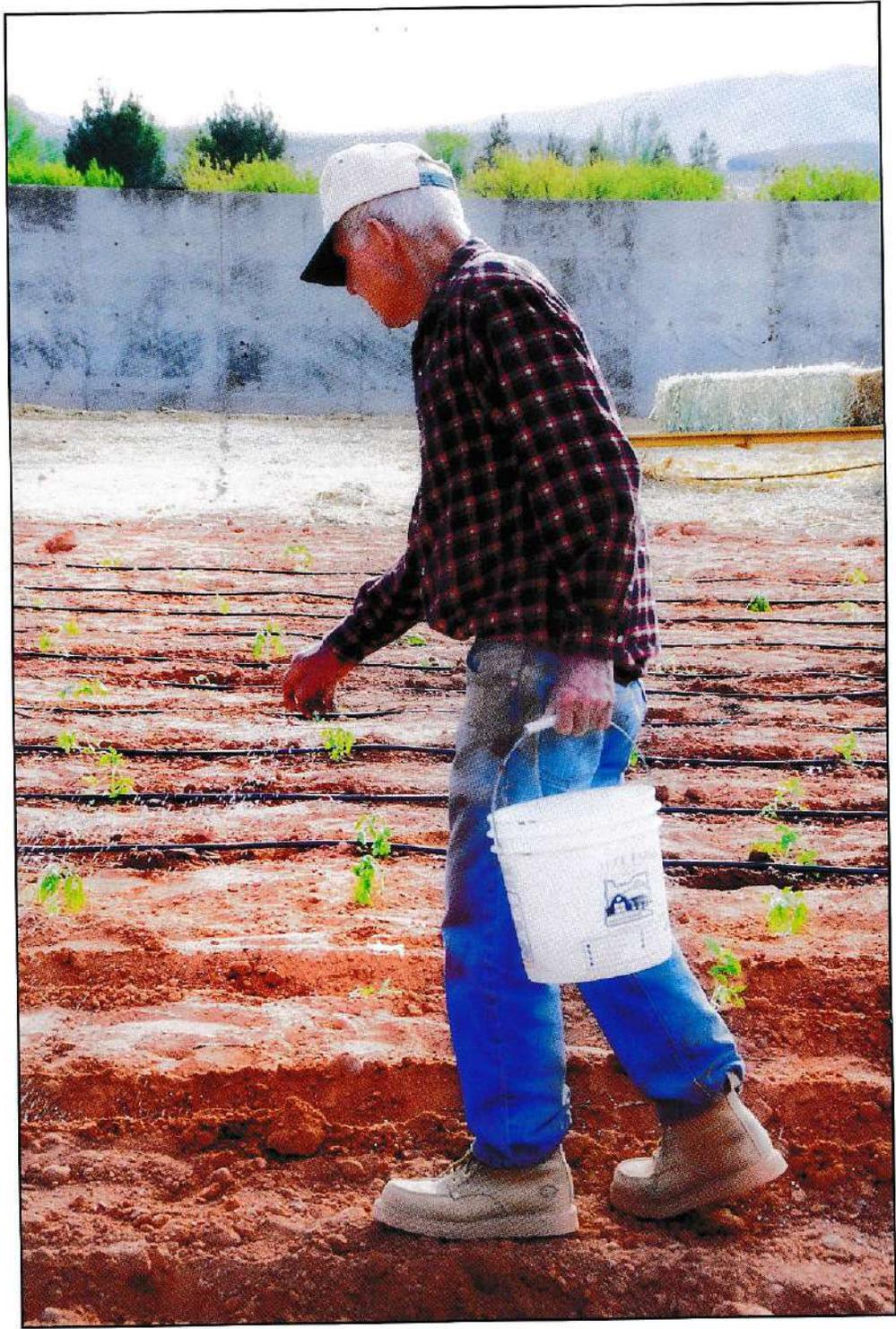


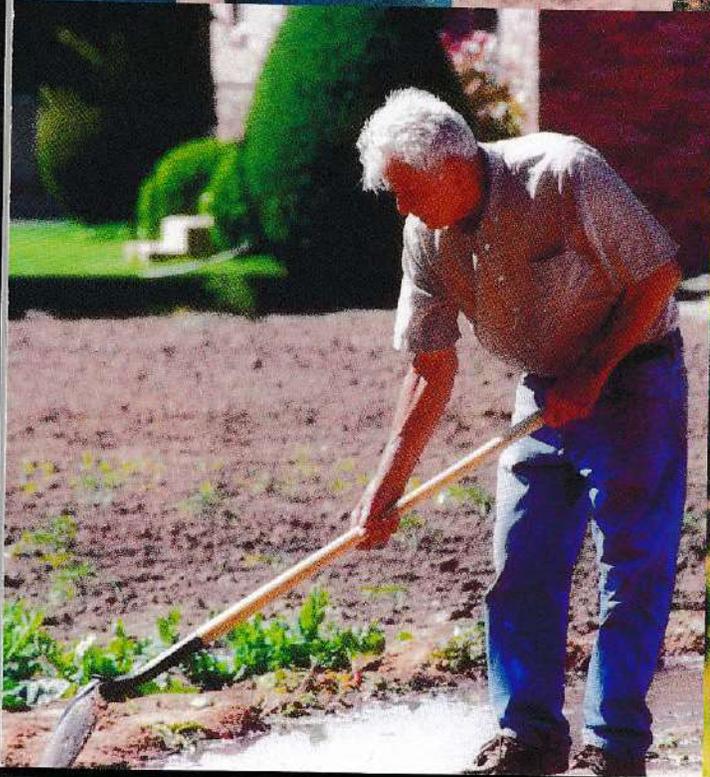
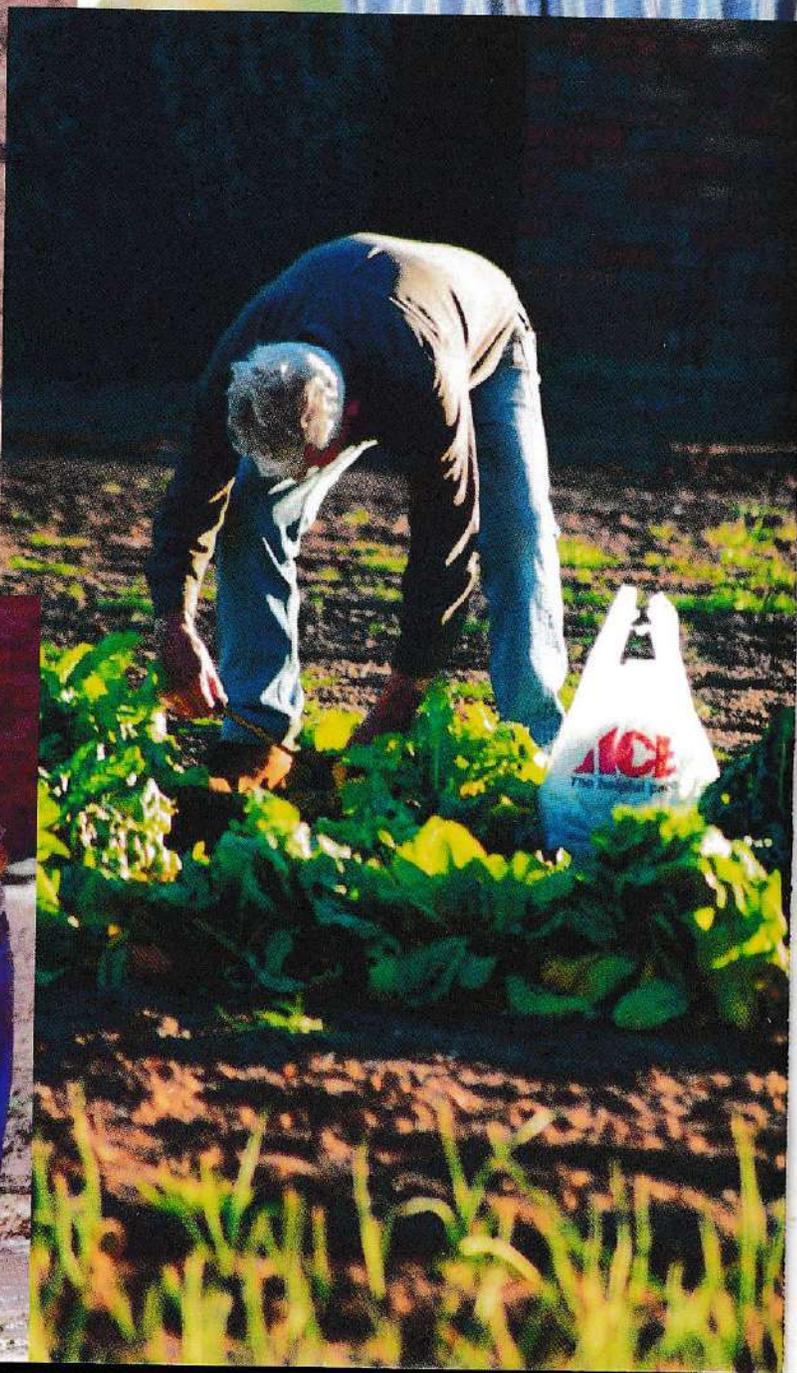
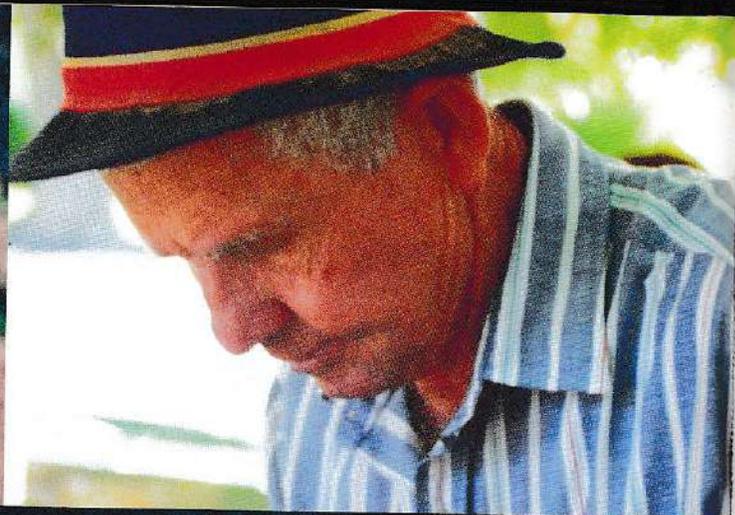
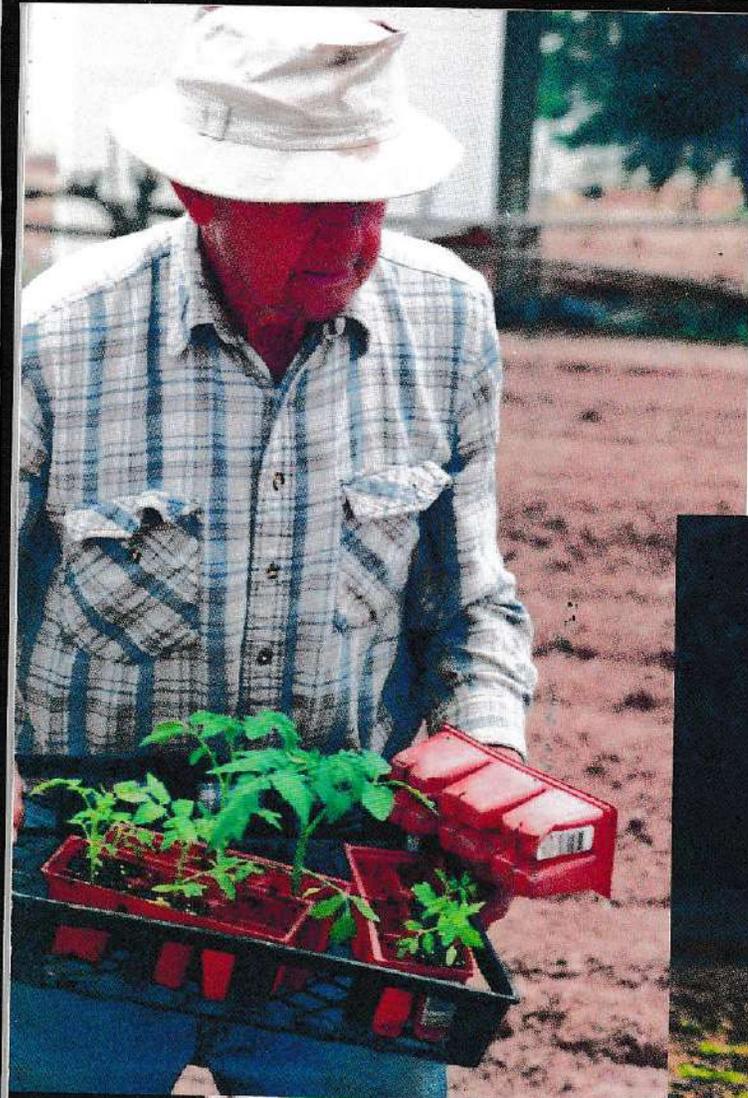


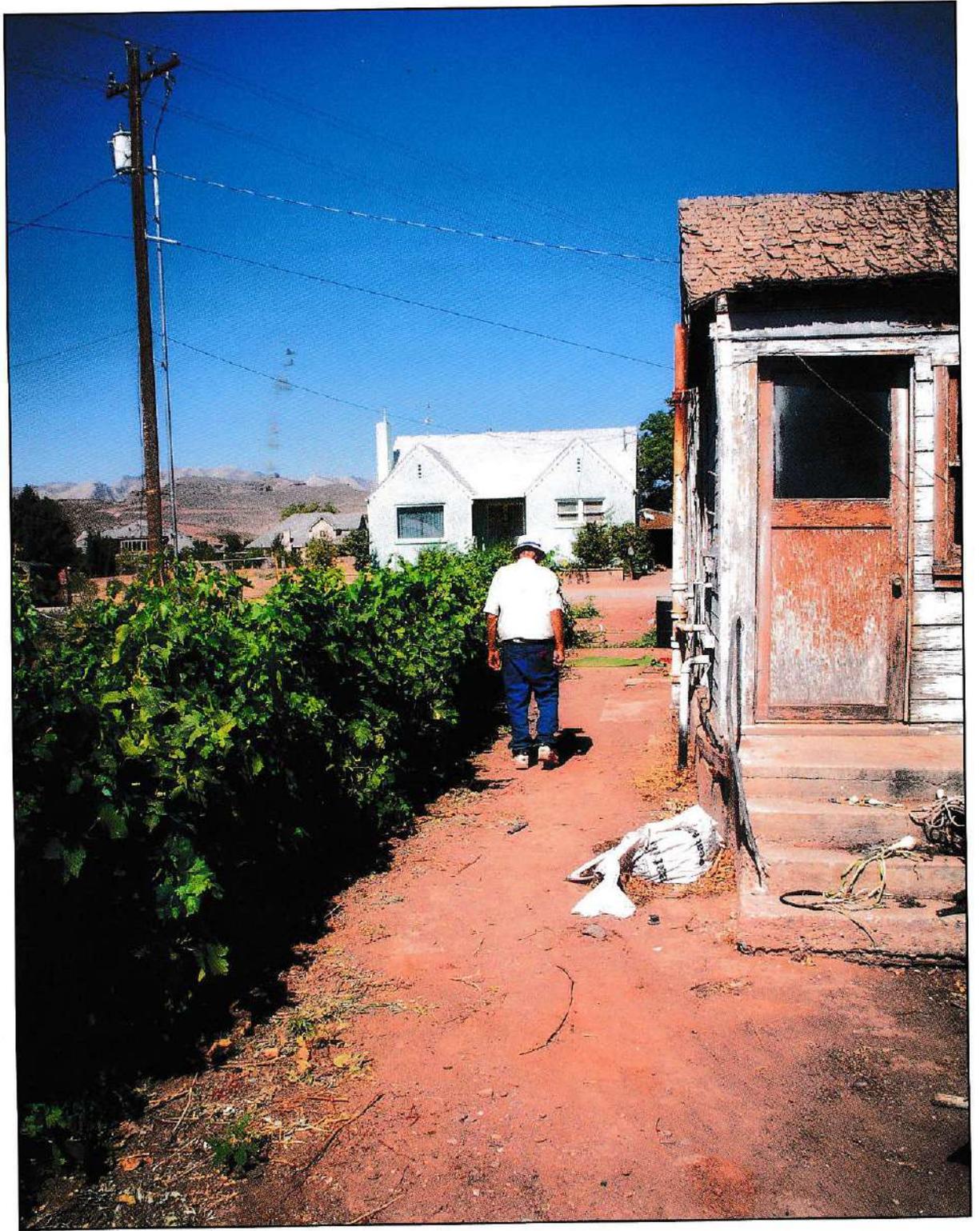














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