

## SEVERE ALLERGIC REACTIONS FORCE 35-YEAR-OLD TO LIVE SHELTERED LIFE

# Rare Disease Separates Farmer From Family

Frank Whitley lives alone in a small 1-room building that's just a few steps away from the comfortable house that's home to his wife and two daughters.

Whitley, of Sask., Canada, is the unfortunate victim of a rare disease that has caused him to develop severe allergies to just about every man-made product you can think of, including farm chemicals, fuels, plastics, nylon, perfume, most foods, paint, engine exhaust, and just about everything else in modern society that's not a 100% pure and natural organic product.

Environmental disease — the name researchers have given to this little-known phenomenon — has only been recognized as a true physical malady the last few years. Previously, health professionals attributed symptoms like Whitley's to conventional disease.

The 35-year-old Whitley's suffering began 14 years ago and got progressively worse until he was incapacitated two years ago. "It started with severe pains in my hands and feet that doctors said was gout but which they couldn't treat. Then I developed severe headaches that they said were caused by stress," recalls Whitley. After about 12 years of developing a wide range of symptoms and never showing up as allergic under normal test procedures, he developed severe pains in the groin area which were treated with sulpha drugs. He had a severe reaction to the drugs which was almost fatal and left him in the hospital for months. After his release it was though his whole immune system had broken down and he became extremely sick around almost any man-made product.

Living at home became impossible because Whitley is allergic to the fuel oil used in heating the house and he has reactions to cooking odors, household cleansers, synthetic fabrics, and many other chemicals most people come into contact with every day. They can all produce physical symptoms ranging from severe abdominal pain to nausea, earaches and dizziness. At the cost of \$6,000, he built his small living quarters next to the house. Made almost entirely from bare wood and ceramic tile, and heated by clean electric heat, Whitley can live fairly normally there.

"I'm in the worst shape every spring when there's lots of spraying of chemicals. My body is like a bottle. I can always feel the effects of things

but, when I'm over-exposed, it seems to fill up and overflow and that's when I get sick," says Whitley, who wears a portable breathing apparatus that has helped him hang on to his 12 quarters of land, along with lots of help from other family members.

Because of his problem, Whitley has to custom hire his spraying and fertilizing work. He can do some mid-season field work and helps at harvest although diesel exhaust bothers him. "As soon as most of the chemical spraying is over with the air clears up so that I can have some days when I almost feel normal. Those days are great," says Whitley.

He can only eat a few foods without getting sick and relies primarily on a powdered food called Vivonex that he eats at the rate of 10 packages a day. As his system rejects more foods, he depends more heavily on Vivonex which he now consumes a cost of \$900 per month. He's trying to qualify for government medical assistance programs but because of his large farm they say he doesn't qualify. He may have to sell his farm to pay for the help he needs.

Whitley's wife Beth says that her husband's condition changed every aspect of their life. "We can't go to many functions because Frank might suffer an attack and when we do, I can't wear perfume or many kinds of makeup because of his allergies."

Travel is also a problem for Whitley. While the rest of the family sleeps in a motel rooms, he spends the night in an all-wood pickup camper box he built in the back of his pickup.

The only long-term solution for Whitley — and others like him — seems to be to get into a pure environment. He recently spent several weeks in a remote mountain area and found that he felt 100% better and could eat some of the foods that bothered him when at home. If he cannot soon find a cure at home, he may have to sell out and retreat back to nature and try to earn some kind of living there.

"Some researchers are beginning to think that many of the aches and pains people have that can't be conventionally explained are really just some type of allergy people have to the environment around them," says Whitley.

Frank would like to hear from anyone who's had similar problems. Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Frank Whitley, Box 155, Simpson, Sask. Canada (ph 306 836-2105).

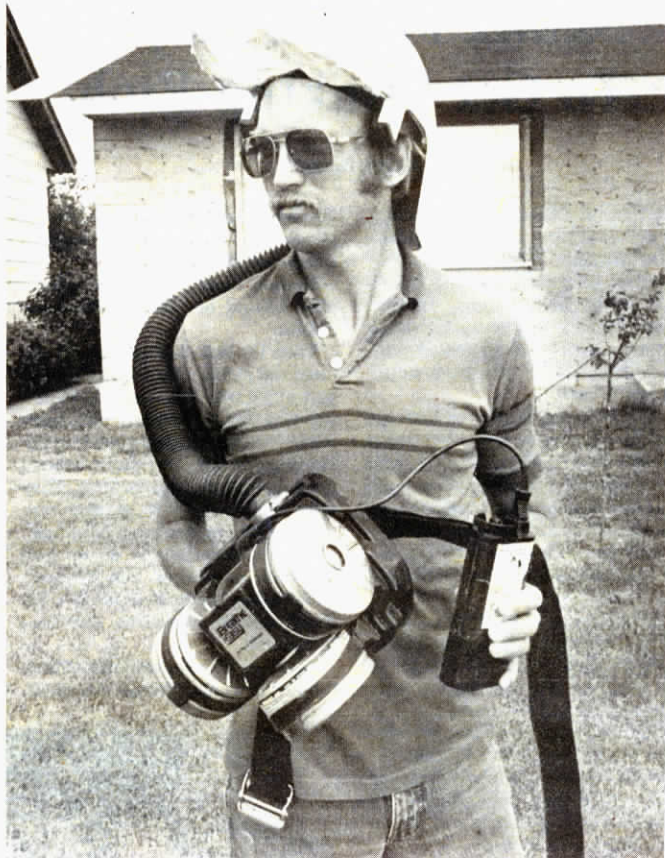


Photo courtesy Saskatoon Star Phoenix

With the aid of this portable breathing apparatus, and the help of his family, Whitley still farms 12 quarters of land.



Wide World Photos

Giant pop-art display draws many second looks.

## FARMER'S DAUGHTER DRESSED THEM UP WITH STYLIZED "POP-ART" LETTERING

# Painted Bins Resemble Giant Kitchen Canisters

Carol Willis is a commercial artist — and a farmer's daughter — who used her imagination to dress up the four grain bins on her parent's farm near Evansville, Ind.

Using stylized lettering of the type

often found on kitchen canisters, Carol painted up four bins to read "tea", "coffee", "sugar" and "flour". The giant pop-art display prompts nearly everyone driving by to stop and take a second look.