

End of harvest begins life cycle

Tranquil stillness envelops the sprawling field now, the harvest is over. Corn stalks, zucchini plants, pumpkin patches, tomato vines and massive sunflower trees once brimming with life now wither gracefully through the short autumn days. Where human hands once rustled through the leaves of corn stalks only the chill wind now stirs, except for a few birds that sit and chirp among the golden brown tassels.

Tomato bushes collapse into themselves, the deep red fruit turning fuzzy. Pumpkin and squash vines, just recently plucked, weave long, twisting, winding arms uselessly about.

Only a solitary watermelon still grows, greening and ripening its flesh in the occasional sun that breaks through the blanket of clouds and rain. A few people still wander amid the rows of aging plants, still looking for late-arriving crops, but the pickings are slim. The weeds have taken over, infesting themselves on the once clear, brown-earthed plots. A forest of gold and brown-tinged scavengers, feeding upon the dying foliage, just as we feed on the living, continuing a very natural cycle of life.

Sunflower trees that used to rise straight and tall, have long since aged, hunched over like old men. Beans that were long and green only weeks ago are now contorted like old, arthritic fingers, still clinging to their



Story and photos
by Duffy Coffman



FINAL HARVEST—Kelly Moser displays rewards of late season rummaging through the crops.

