

# Landownership within Amish Settlements in Wisconsin: An Exploratory Study

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**Abstract:** This study examines patterns of landownership within 18 Amish settlements in Wisconsin, including nine of the state's ten largest settlements, plus nine smaller settlements. Landownership was plotted for 2,048 Amish households, who collectively owned over 115,000 acres. These households were drawn from 105 church districts, representing 58.7 percent of the state's total. The study utilized three types of data: the recent Amish directory for Wisconsin, plat atlases showing landownership for selected counties, and detailed satellite imagery provided by Google Maps.

Average acreage per household ranged from 27.7 to 86.6 acres among the settlements. Differences in acreage owned per household appear related to occupations. Average acreage of Amish-owned land per survey section ranged from 41.6 to 201.2 acres. The maximum acreage of Amish-owned land in each settlement's survey sections ranged from 120 to 639 acres. Amish landholdings exceeded 160 acres in 30.3 percent of the sections having Amish lands, with the settlements' proportions ranging from 0 to 55.2 percent.

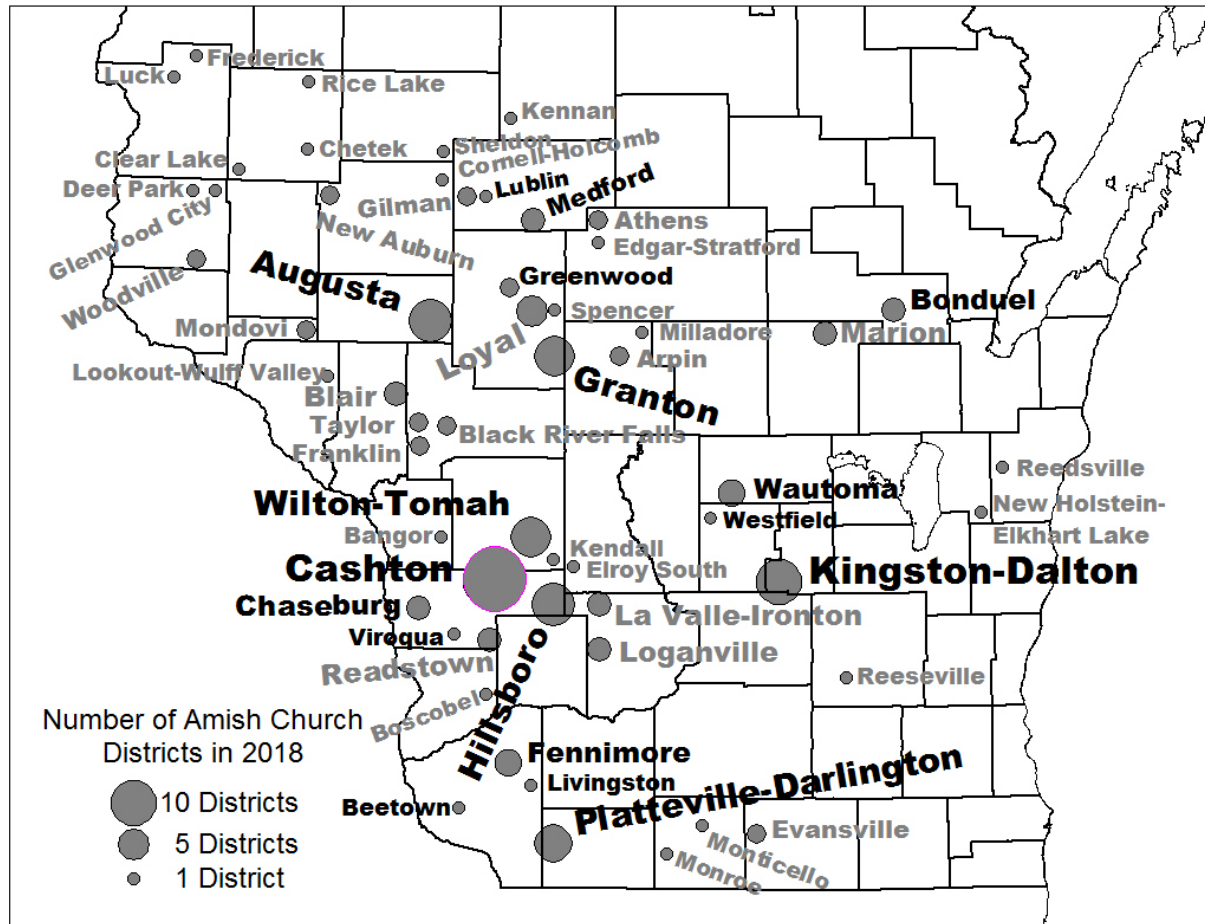
Interspersion of Amish lands among lands owned by non-Amish people is the norm, but differences in the density of Amish holdings, displayed by owned maximum acreage per section and average landholdings per section, are related to founding date and settlement size. Settlements established before the mid-1980s display greater clustering of Amish landownership. Newer settlements display many noncontiguous sections with Amish-owned lands not adjacent on their sides or corners to other sections having Amish lands. This pattern is particularly conspicuous within the Platteville-Darlington and Fennimore settlements.

Submitted June 22, 2022; accepted August 1, 2022; published November 29, 2022  
<https://doi.org/10.18061/jpac.v3i1.9084>

**Keywords:** Amish, lands, landholdings, landownership, Wisconsin

This exploratory study examines patterns of landownership within 18 Amish settlements in Wisconsin, selected to represent both new and longer-established settlements, as well as large and small. Likewise, it includes settlements known for their involvement in dairying (both can and bulk milk producers) and those more focused upon other occupations. In total, landownership was plotted for 2,048 Amish households, who collectively own over 115,000 acres. Nine of Wisconsin's ten largest Amish settlements, which currently comprise between five and 18 church districts (Donnermeyer 2022), were included in the study. Among the top ten settlements, only the Loyal Swartzentruber Amish settlement, which is tied for eighth largest given its number of church districts, was excluded. In addition, landownership data for nine smaller settlements were obtained. The settlements included are distributed across Wisconsin (Figure 1).



**Figure 1***Amish Settlements Included in Landownership Study*

*Note.* The 18 Amish settlements whose landownership patterns are studied are shown in bold black type. Wisconsin's other Amish settlements are labeled in gray. The size of the settlements is shown by their number of church districts in 2018, the date of the directory used to provide household information.

Patterns of Amish landownership, in particular the spatial distribution and clustering of Amish lands and their intermixing with lands owned by non-Amish (or “English”) individuals, are superficially addressed in the academic literature. Indeed, while John Hostetler notes that “in most places the Amish live adjacent to non-Amish farm neighbors” (1993, 12) and that high land prices have led to smaller landholdings in Lancaster County, the varying intensity or density of Amish landholdings is ignored. Likewise, while Don Kraybill and colleagues (2013) describe the consequences of high land prices in encouraging movement to more affordable settlements, the influence of landholding intensity and concentration is generally ignored. One of the best examinations of Amish landownership and intergenerational transfer is found in Walter Kollmorgen’s (1942) study published 80 years ago. More recently, Charles Hurst and David McConnell (2010) note issues regarding land prices and availability in the Holmes County, Ohio, Amish community, resulting in changing occupations for many Amish. Population pressures on a

limited land base within long-standing Amish communities have escalated land costs, promoted occupational changes, and necessitated decisions regarding acceptable technology (Kraybill and Olshan 1994). David Luthy (2003) has described how Amish farmsteads within long-established settlements in Indiana, Ohio, and Pennsylvania are subdivided and sold, providing smaller parcels for Amish populations remaining there and facilitating population movement to new settlements, including those in Wisconsin. Luthy (1985, 1992, 2003) clearly describes a variety of motivations, including the desire to obtain reasonably priced farmland, in promoting growth of new Amish settlements. Recent academic publications explore the factors influencing the continued establishment of new Amish communities (Anderson and Kenda 2015), of which access to land in appropriate rural settings is critical.

Hypotheses are made in this study regarding the proportion of land that needs to be in Amish ownership for settlements to experience sustained growth, and the mixture of Amish and non-Amish landownership that characterizes growing Amish settlements established less than a half century ago. Indeed, longer-established Amish settlements are hypothesized to have more densely settled central cores (defined by a high concentration of landownership) than more recently established settlements. Likewise, larger settlements are anticipated to have more densely settled central cores. This study should provide greater understanding regarding the sustainability of the greater rural community in which Amish settlements are situated, given that socioeconomic linkages between the Amish and non-Amish residents of the towns in which they reside are incomplete.

In Wisconsin, civil towns are unincorporated parts of counties, similar to what are designated townships in many other midwestern states. Wisconsin's towns have boundaries that sometimes correspond to Public Land Survey townships, but they do not include incorporated cities and villages that may be surrounded by a town's lands. Some towns are quite large, such as the Town of Bridge Creek, which is the home of much of the Augusta Amish settlement and contains most of three Public Land Survey townships.

### **Study Sites and Methodology**

The 18 Wisconsin Amish settlements included in this study were founded between 1920 and 2017. Together, they include 105 church districts, or 58.7 percent of those in Wisconsin. The study utilized three types of data: the most recent Amish directory for Wisconsin, providing 2018 data on households within the study communities (Yoder 2018); plat atlases showing landownership within eleven counties (Clark County Government 2020; Mapping Solutions 2020a, 2020b, 2021a, 2021b, 2021c, 2021d, 2021e; Rockford Map Publishers 2020a, 2020b, 2021; UW-Extension 2020); and detailed online satellite imagery provided by Google Maps. Plat atlases were obtained, providing coverage of the entirety of Wisconsin's two largest Amish settlements, with the Cashton settlement displayed on the Monroe and Vernon County atlases and the Kingston-Dalton settlement shown on the Green Lake, Marquette, and Columbia County atlases.

Small portions of three other large settlements that overlapped county lines were excluded, yet in each case over 90 percent of those settlements' households are included. Thus, the study

includes the Eau Claire County residents of the Augusta Amish settlement, a total of 227 households, but omits the 20 households that reside in Jackson County. Likewise, the 163 households of the Platteville-Darlington Amish settlement that reside in either Grant or Lafayette Counties are included, but nine households located in Iowa County are excluded. Within the Hillsboro Amish settlement, its 168 households within Vernon County are included, but 13 households in Richland County are omitted. All of the households listed in the directory within the other settlements in this study are included. Thus, within Clark County, both the Granton and Greenwood Amish settlements are included, but the New Order Amish community of Spencer that straddles the county line is excluded. Although the Clark County plat atlas includes the lands of the Loyal Swartzentruber Amish settlement, its lack of inclusion in the directory led to its exclusion from this study.

For each of the communities studied, the locations of the Amish farmsteads were plotted on the plat maps, relying on address information from the directory and satellite imagery from Google Maps that showed precise locations of the buildings on the farmstead. Where the land is in Amish ownership, it was shaded. While undoubtedly some Amish households lease lands from others, the vast majority of the Amish farmsteads are located on lands owned by a member of the household or by identifiable parents or in-laws. (Indeed, of the 2,048 households examined, only 32 are clearly residing on lands that are not Amish-owned.)

Following completion of the plotting of all of the Amish households of the settlement, additional lands showing likely Amish ownership were identified by surname. Where the owner's name corresponded to a specific household listed in the directory for that settlement, the plot was likewise shaded. Where the owner was either listed within another Wisconsin Amish settlement or unlisted but highly likely to be Amish, the parcel was not included as part of the directory acreage, but its acreage was indicated as "Other Amish." Thus, in Table 1 the statistics for "Acreage (directory)" includes all Amish-owned lands positively linked to households within the settlement.

**Table 1***Amish Landownership within Selected Wisconsin Settlements*

Settlement*	Number of church districts	Year founded	Number of households (2018)	Acreage (directory)	Land / household
Cashton	18	1966	358	19,093	53.3 acres
Kingston-Dalton	15	1977	310	12,214	39.4 acres
Augusta, Eau Claire County	10	1978	227	9,815	43.2 acres
Hillsboro, Vernon County	10	1985	168	7,084	42.2 acres
Wilton-Tomah	8	1969	182	13,069	71.8 acres
Granton	8	1981	185	10,349	55.9 acres
Platteville-Darlington, Grant and Lafayette Counties	8	1999	163	13,383	82.1 acres
Wautoma-Coloma	5	1983	94	2,780	29.6 acres
Chaseburg	5	1994	99	4,136	41.8 acres
Fennimore	4	1998	109	6,248	57.3 acres
Medford	3	1920	76	3,710	48.8 acres
Bonduel	3	1987	73	2,649	34.8 acres
Greenwood	3	1975	47	3,527	75.0 acres
Beetown	1	1993	20	700	35.0 acres
Livingston	1	1997	16	1,386	86.6 acres
Lublin	1	2008	31	1,587	51.2 acres
Viroqua	1	1992	15	416	27.7 acres
Westfield	1	2017	3	141	47.0 acres

\*County names indicated for multicounty settlements where landownership was compiled only from the listed counties.

Table 2 reports “Total acreage owned,” which includes the “Other Amish.” Thus, the calculation of land per household utilizes the “Acreage (directory)” statistics, while the “Average acreage / section” uses the “Total acreage owned” data.

**Table 2***Density of Amish Landownership in Selected Wisconsin Amish Settlements*

Settlement*	Total acreage owned	Average acreage / section	Percentage of sections > 160 acres	Percentage of sections > 320 acres	Maximum acreage / section
Cashton	19,554	177.8	46.4%	15.5%	639 acres
Kingston-Dalton	12,490	111.5	25.9%	5.4%	433 acres
Augusta, Eau Claire County	11,001	189.7	46.6%	20.7%	556 acres
Hillsboro, Vernon County	7,705	115.0	28.4%	0%	313 acres
Wilton-Tomah	13,482	201.2	55.2%	16.4%	526 acres
Granton	10,711	146.7	37.0%	6.9%	437 acres
Platteville-Darlington, Grant and Lafayette Counties	14,286	103.5	22.5%	4.3%	405 acres
Wautoma-Coloma	2,918	66.3	11.4%	0%	264 acres
Chaseburg	4,197	104.9	22.5%	7.5%	397 acres
Fennimore	6,629	118.4	25.4%	5.4%	418 acres
Medford	3,790	157.9	29.2%	8.3%	553 acres
Bonduel	2,543	85.4	22.6%	3.2%	323 acres
Greenwood	3,630	129.6	32.1%	3.6%	400 acres
Beetown	700	63.6	18.2%	0%	261 acres
Livingston	1,570	98.1	18.7%	0%	227 acres
Lublin	1,587	56.7	3.6%	0%	261 acres
Viroqua	416	41.6	0%	0%	137 acres
Westfield	316	52.7	0%	0%	120 acres

\* County names indicated for multicounty settlements where landownership was compiled only from the listed counties.

**Range of Observations**

Among Wisconsin's larger Amish settlements, comprising five or more church districts (Table 1), the amount of land owned by the households of a settlement ranged from 2,780 acres to 19,093 acres. Total acreage did not consistently correspond to settlement size. Indeed, households within three settlements owned more total acreage than within the second largest settlement. Furthermore, although the Kingston-Dalton settlement has nearly twice as many households as the Platteville-Darlington settlement, the Platteville settlement's households own over 1,100 more acres. Thus, landownership within the Platteville settlement, which averages 82.1 acres per household, is over twice the 39.4 acres per household within the Kingston-Dalton settlement. Of the Amish settlements studied, only the small Livingston settlement, immediately to the north of the Platteville settlement and overlapping with the Fennimore settlement to its west, had a greater average household landownership: 86.6 acres per household.

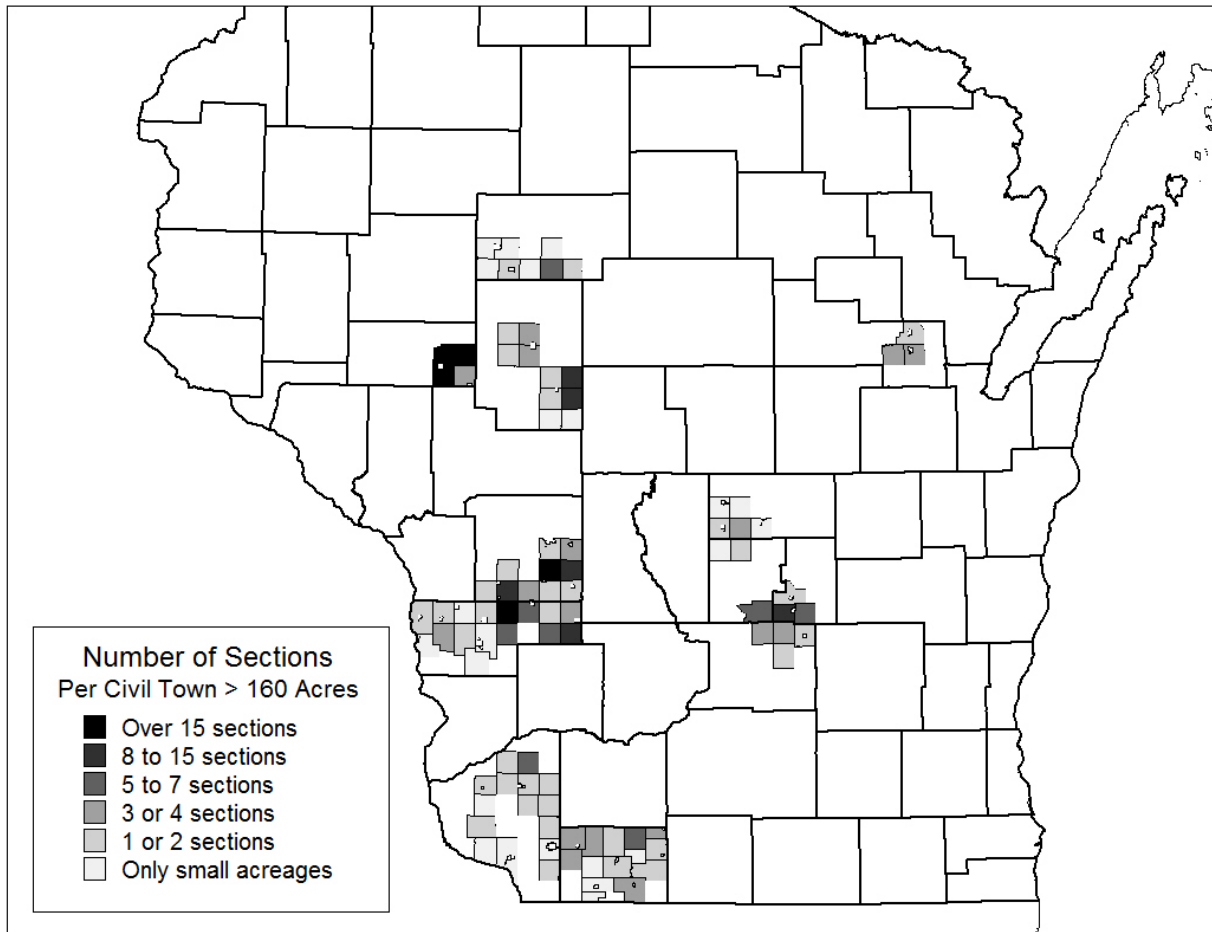
Only four of the settlements studied showed smaller average household landownership than what was observed in the Kingston-Dalton settlement, with the small Viroqua settlement averaging

27.7 acres and the Wautoma-Coloma settlement averaging 29.6 acres. The differences in landholdings per household are likely related to employment opportunities. As noted in Cross (2018), in the Kingston-Dalton settlement, farming and woodworking employed a comparable number of households, while farming was more prominent within the Cashton settlement. Of those engaged in farming, a far greater proportion in Cashton were engaged in dairying in 2018, in comparison with Kingston-Dalton. Indeed, Amish households within the Cashton Amish settlement operated 131 licensed dairy herds in 2018, while those within the Kingston-Dalton settlement had 64 dairy herds (Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection 2018). The Town of Clinton in Vernon County, in the heart of the Cashton Amish settlement and the location of an Amish-built cheese factory, led the state in its total number of dairy herds, of which 72 were Amish operations.

### **Density of Amish Settlement**

The proportion of Amish-owned land within the vicinity of Amish settlements varies widely (Table 2). The greatest concentration of Amish ownership is in the Cashton settlement, in particular within the Town of Clinton. While the Cashton Amish settlement sprawls across nine towns within two counties and includes 19,554 acres in Amish ownership, just over half of that figure—9,875 acres—is within the Town of Clinton. Thirty-four of the town's 36 sections include Amish landholdings. Within two of the sections, Amish holdings comprise almost all of the land, with 639 acres being owned in one section and 637 being owned in another. In total, Amish landholdings are found in 110 survey sections comprising the Cashton settlement, with the average area of Amish ownership being 177.8 acres per section. While nearly half of the sections with Amish lands have over 160 acres, 15.5 percent of those in the Cashton settlement exceed 320 acres.

Dense areas of Amish landholdings are found within two other large Amish settlements (Figure 2). Within the Augusta Amish settlement, one survey section displays Amish landholdings of 556 acres. In the Wilton-Tomah settlement, one section includes 526 acres of Amish-owned lands. Within the Augusta settlement, nearly half of the 58 survey sections with Amish landholdings have over 160 acres, and 21 percent have over 320 acres. In the Wilton-Tomah Amish settlement, 57 percent of the survey sections include over 160 acres of Amish-owned land, while Amish landholdings exceed 320 acres within 17 percent of the sections.

**Figure 2***Amish Landownership of Over 160 Acres per Survey Section*

*Note.* The number of sections per civil town in which Amish landownership exceeds 160 acres are mapped for the 18 settlements studied.

Among several of the other sizeable settlements, Amish landholdings are considerably less concentrated. For example, the Wautoma-Coloma Amish settlement extends over 44 survey sections, yet the average Amish landholding per section is only 66.3 acres. The greatest Amish-owned acreage in any section is 264 acres. Fewer than one in eight sections within the Wautoma-Coloma settlement include more than 160 acres of Amish lands. Within only two of the 45 one-square-mile survey sections comprising the Green Lake County portion of the Kingston-Dalton settlement did the Amish own over half of the acreage.

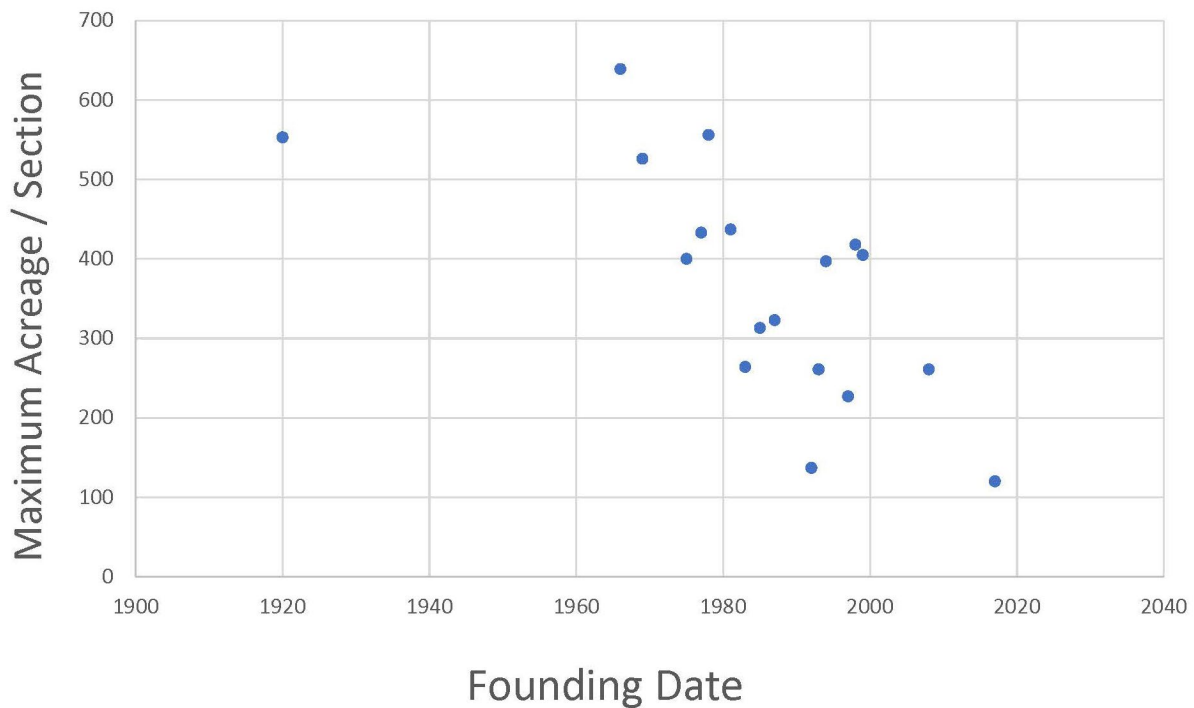
As Amish settlements grow, it is hypothesized that landholdings become more concentrated, as over time opportunities to acquire inholdings avail themselves. Thus, one might expect both older and larger settlements to have core areas where Amish ownership dominates. For example, the much smaller Medford Amish settlement, founded in 1920, includes one section where Amish households own 553 acres. Yet it includes the same number of church districts today as it did a half century ago, and it has not attained the concentrated core of ownership that three communities



half its age have. Figure 3 illustrates the correlation between age of the settlement and maximum acreage of Amish-owned land within a survey section of the settlement. Figure 4 plots the relationship between date of settlement founding and density of Amish landownership, represented by the average number of Amish-owned acres per section. It clearly shows that longer established settlements tend to have more densely positioned Amish landholdings. In addition, a similar relationship can be discerned between settlement size, shown by the number of households, and density of landholdings (Figure 5).

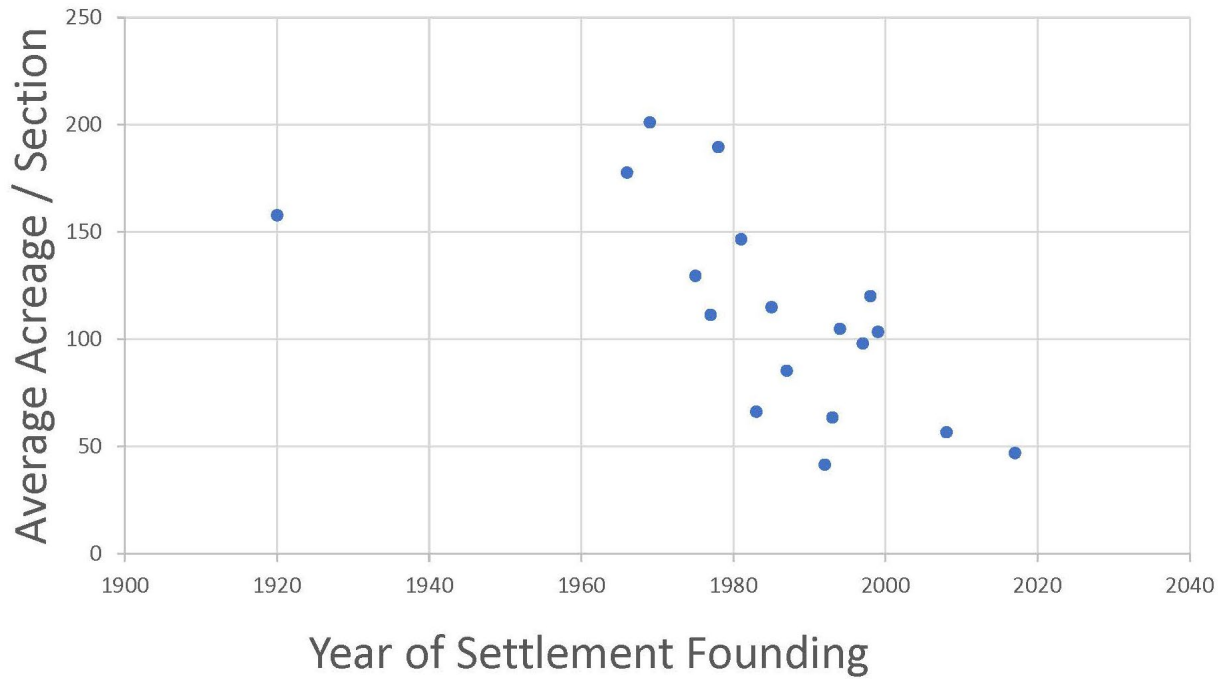
**Figure 3**

*Relationship between Maximum Acreage of Amish Landownership within a Survey Section and Settlement Founding Date*



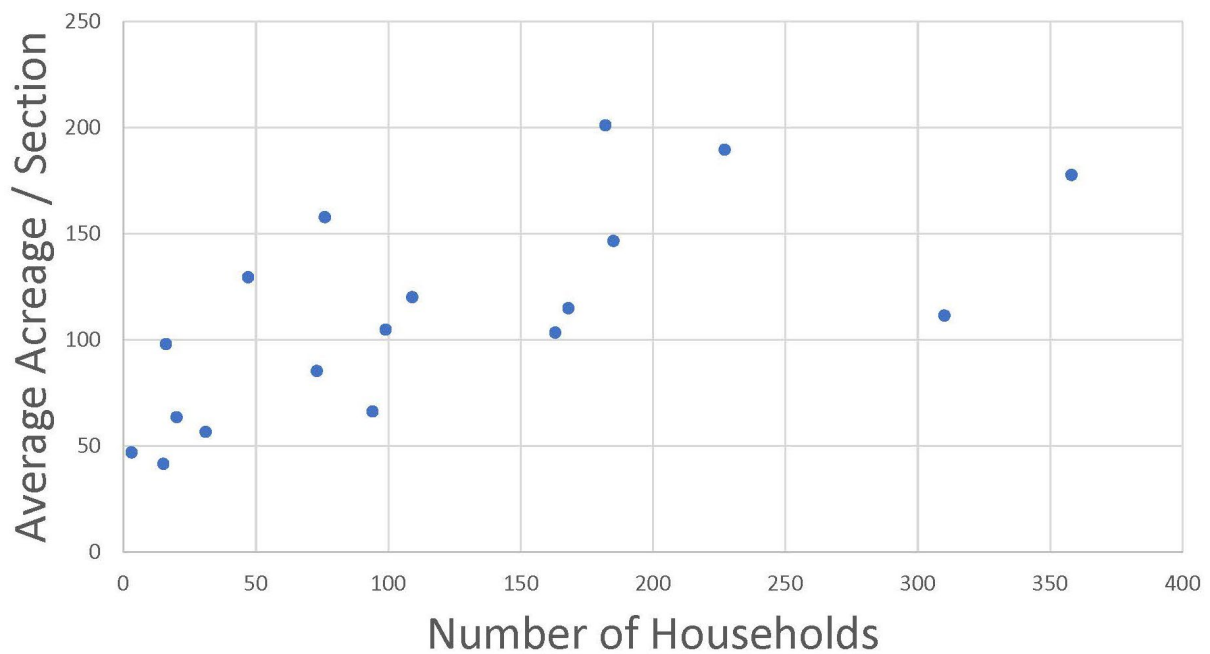
**Figure 4**

*Relationship between Density of Amish Landownership, Displayed by Average Acreage of Amish-Owned Land per Section, and Settlement Founding Date*



**Figure 5**

*Relationship between Density of Amish Landownership, Displayed by Average Acreage of Amish-Owned Land per Section, and Number of Households within the Settlement*

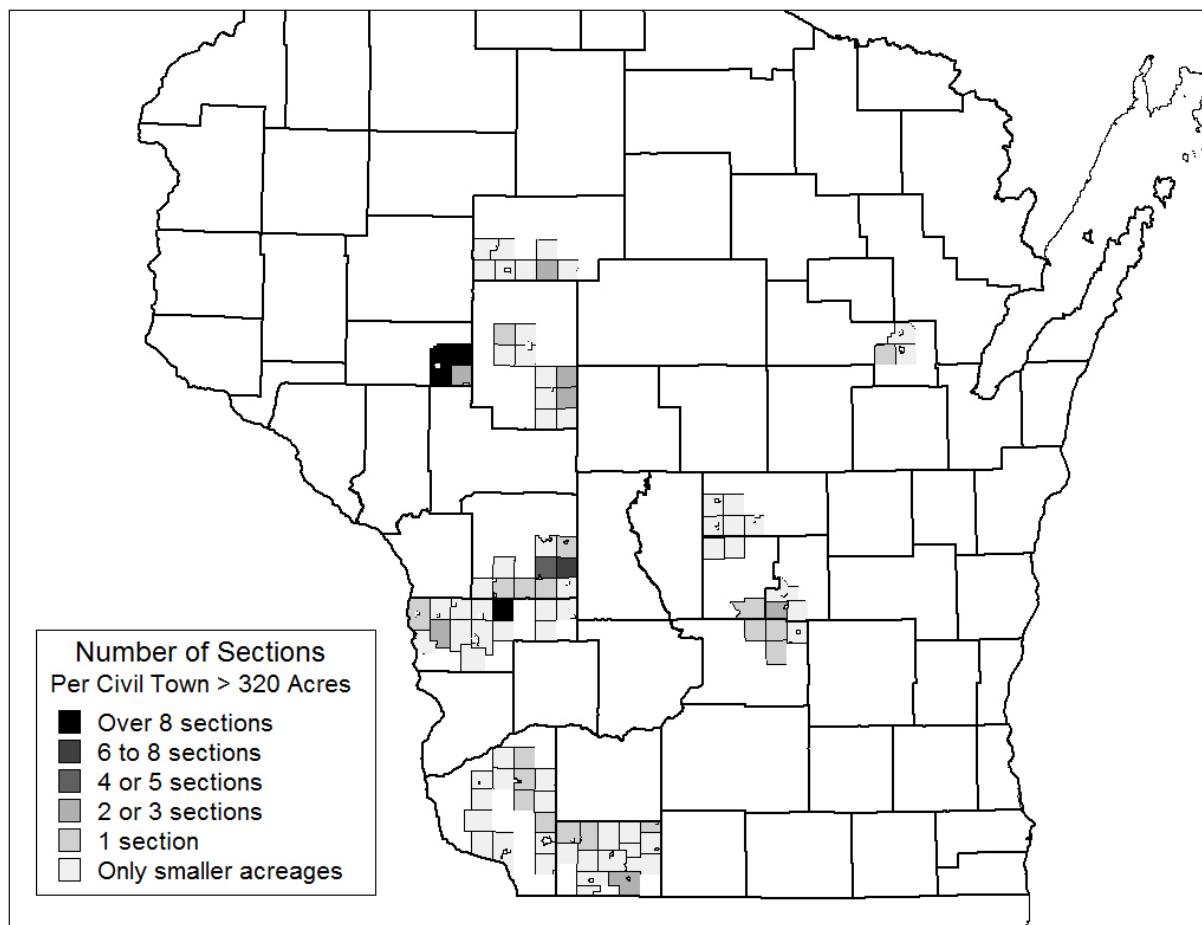


### Concentration and Dispersal of Landownership

The number of sections per civil town—Wisconsin’s equivalent to the township—that have Amish landholdings of greater than 160 acres, or that exceed one-quarter of a typical one-square-mile section’s area, are shown in Figure 2. Within many of Wisconsin’s Amish settlements, there are very few sections with even 160 acres of Amish-owned land—such as within the Wautoma-Coloma, Bonduel, Greenwood, Lublin, Chaseburg, Fennimore, and Platteville-Darlington settlements. Even fewer sections exceed 320 acres (Figure 6)—none within some of the settlements.

**Figure 6**

*Number of Sections per Civil Town in which Amish Landownership Exceeds 320 Acres*



While the small average landholdings per household appear responsible for this pattern within several settlements, such as Wautoma, Beetown, Lublin, and Viroqua, other explanations are necessary when considering Fennimore and Platteville-Darlington.

In many settlements, lands owned by Amish households are located in moderately close proximity to one another, even if not adjoining. As shown in Table 3, in this project, survey sections of typically 640 acres that contain Amish lands are classified into one of three categories: (1) those that are contiguous to other sections—either on their sides or corners—that contain

Amish-owned lands; (2) those that are in clusters of three or more sections that are contiguous with each other, but not with other sections that include Amish-owned lands; and (3) those that are noncontiguous. (Where two sections are contiguous to each other, usually with a landholding crossing the section line, but are otherwise unconnected to any other section with Amish landholdings, they are counted as noncontiguous.)

**Table 3***Dispersal of Amish Landholdings in Selected Wisconsin Amish Settlements*

Settlement*	Total acreage owned	Average acreage / section	Total survey sections with Amish	Number of noncontiguous sections
Cashton	19,554	177.8	110	1
Kingston-Dalton	12,490	111.5	112	1
Augusta, Eau Claire County	11,001	189.7	58	1
Hillsboro, Vernon County	7,705	115.0	67	0
Wilton-Tomah	13,482	201.2	65	2
Granton	10,711	146.7	73	2
Platteville-Darlington, Grant and Lafayette Counties	14,286	103.5	138	14 + 12 clusters
Wautoma-Coloma	2,918	66.3	44	0
Chaseburg	4,197	104.9	40	2
Fennimore	6,629	118.4	56	7 + 5 clusters
Medford	3,790	157.9	24	0
Bonduel	2,543	85.4	31	7
Greenwood	3,630	129.6	28	0
Beetown	700	63.6	11	7
Livingston	1,570	98.1	16	2
Lublin	1,587	56.7	28	6
Viroqua	416	41.6	10	3
Westfield	316	52.7	6	2

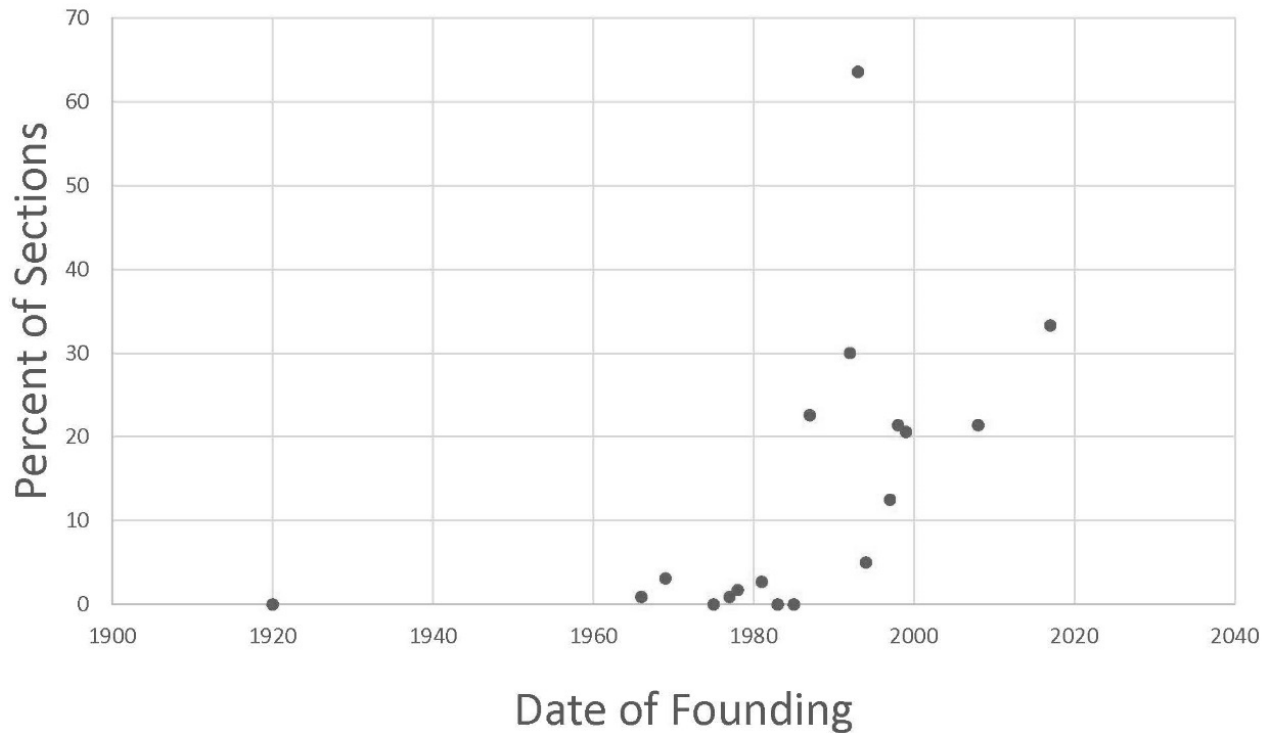
\* County names indicated for multicounty settlements where landownership was compiled only from the listed counties.

In many Amish settlements, very few sections are noncontiguous. For example, within the six towns that include the Wilton-Tomah settlement, there are only two noncontiguous sections that have Amish lands. The Cashton, Kingston-Dalton, and Augusta settlements have only one each, and there are none within the Hillsboro settlement. In contrast, within the Platteville-Darlington settlement, which is spread across five towns in Grant County and 14 towns in Lafayette County—almost the entirety of the county—plus a small corner of Iowa County, Amish landholdings are found within one large group of 25 contiguous sections (plus several in Iowa County) and among 12 clusters of three to 13 contiguous sections, plus 14 noncontiguous sections. Nevertheless, the

average acreage of Amish-owned land per section is 103.5 acres. The Fennimore and Beetown settlements, also in Grant County, also have a disproportionate number of noncontiguous sections—as do most of the other settlements that have been established since the mid-1980s (Figure 7).

**Figure 7**

*Relationship between Percentage of Sections of Amish-Owned Land Being Located in Noncontiguous Sections and Date of Settlement's Establishment*



*Note.* Each noncontiguous cluster of sections containing Amish-owned land within a settlement was counted as being a single noncontiguous section in calculating the relationship.

### ***Platteville-Darlington Settlement's Large Acreages***

The dispersed clusters of Amish landholdings and noncontiguous sections within the Platteville-Darlington settlement may illustrate the pattern of growth within the settlement. Founded in 1999 by Amish settlers from Pennsylvania, its members have surnames not found in most of Wisconsin's other Amish settlements. Platteville-Darlington is Wisconsin's most rapidly growing large Amish settlement. It also has the largest identified landholdings held by any Amish household in the state. One Amish household in Platteville-Darlington owns 660 acres (spread across six parcels), while another one owns 624 acres, distributed among four parcels of between 67 and 298 acres. A third household owns 394 acres, split between parcels of 176 and 218 acres. In total, there are ten Amish households that each own in excess of 200 acres within the settlement. The local Amish engagement in dairying, involving 98 licensed dairy herds owned by Platteville-Darlington households in 2018, explains some of this finding, as eight of these ten large

landholders had licensed dairy herds. Furthermore, local Amish production of Grade A milk involves larger dairy herds, in contrast with the production of Grade B can milk by Amish farmers within the Cashton, Kingston-Dalton, Augusta, and Wilton-Tomah settlements (Cross 2014). Thus, the Platteville-Darlington Amish farmers would require greater areas of pastures. However, community expansion appears a more likely explanation.

Given the high prices for agricultural land within Pennsylvania's Lancaster County area, Amish farmers can sell their lands and acquire considerably greater acreages in Wisconsin, sufficient to provide farms for several to all of their children. Indeed, in 2018, land sales for land continuing in agriculture averaged \$6,922 per acre in Grant County and \$6,953 in Lafayette County (Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service 2019). Prices of agricultural land within Pennsylvania's Lancaster County were over three times greater, and those lands close to expanding urban areas brought considerably higher prices (McDevitt 2019). Thus, what we are seeing in the Platteville-Darlington settlement is consistent with the observation of Kraybill and his colleagues (2013, 281–282): “In many cases, households committed to farming left communities plagued by high real estate prices for more sparsely populated areas where land was more affordable and they could farm profitably.” Indeed, Lafayette County, whose current population is less than what it was in 1860, is experiencing rapid growth of its Amish population, similar to what Steven Nolt and Thomas Meyers (2007) observed in Indiana, and those Amish households who hold large acreages can readily accommodate further expansion. Given directory household data for 2018 and results of the 2020 Census, Amish residents now account for at least 6 percent of the county's population.

Some of the growth of the Pennsylvania Amish within the Platteville-Darlington settlement is indirect, representing relocations from other settlements. For example, given that the plat book covering most of the Platteville-Darlington settlement is more recent (2021) than the Amish directory (2018), it was noted that at least six of the Amish landowners had directory addresses in the Athens settlement, which shows a pattern of recent movement between settlements that are located 180 miles apart. Yet, like the Platteville-Darlington settlement, the Athens settlement has a Lancaster County affiliation (Burdge 2016). Elements of what we have seen in Platteville-Darlington are also seen in another settlement in Grant County.

### ***Fennimore Settlement's Pattern***

Households in the Fennimore Amish settlement, established in 1998, prominently feature Beiler, Fisher, Lapp, Smucker, Stoltzfus, and Swarey surnames, indicative of their Pennsylvania origins. With only half as many church districts, the smaller Fennimore settlement also has Amish landholdings that are highly dispersed, with widely separated clusters and noncontiguous sections. Some of its noncontiguous clusters and sections are separated by greater distances from other Amish households than within the Platteville settlement. Indeed, the Fennimore-Mount Hope church district is a dozen miles from the heart of the Fennimore-Hickory Grove church district, and Amish landholdings within the Town of Mount Hope are dispersed into several small clusters that are separated from their nearest ones to the east by over four miles. To its east, the Fennimore

settlement overlaps with the Livingston settlement, with families from both settlements having properties on two sections, and it reaches within eight miles of the nearest Platteville settlement farmstead. The dispersed character of Amish landownership within the Fennimore Amish settlement is undoubtedly influenced by the presence of Old Order Mennonites. Both those in the Groffdale Conference—the horse-and-buggy Mennonites—and those in the Weaverland Conference, who use automobiles, have farmsteads scattered across the towns that contain the Old Order Amish within the Fennimore settlement (Cross 2021). Several survey sections include properties owned by members of both Anabaptist groups.

### **Summary of Findings and Conclusions**

This exploratory research investigating landownership within Wisconsin's Amish settlements documented a wide range of holdings. The average acreage owned by households ranged from a low of 27.7 acres to a high of 86.6 acres—both within single-church-district settlements whose small number of households could skew the results, such as in the Livingston settlement, where one of its 16 households owned 434 acres. Considering settlements of at least five church districts, acreage per household ranged from 29.6 acres to 82.1 acres. The greatest acreages were in the settlement where land prices per acre were twice that within the settlement showing smaller acreages per household. Likewise, the settlement with the larger average acreages per household was more engaged with dairying, particularly Grade A milk production, and was located in a county with higher average crop yields per acre.

Within most of the survey sections where the Amish own land, they own considerably less than a quarter of the total area. Indeed, of the 916 survey sections occupied by the Amish within the 18 settlements studied, they own more than 160 acres within 278 sections, or 30.3 percent. Among the separate settlements, the proportion of survey sections with Amish landholdings that exceeded 160 acres ranges from 0 percent to 55.2 percent. The average Amish-owned acreage per section within the 18 settlements studied ranges from 41.6 acres to 201.2 acres. The maximum acreage in any survey section within the 18 settlements ranges from 120 acres to 639 acres. Thus, the interspersal of Amish lands among lands owned by non-Amish is the norm, yet differences in the degree of dispersal and concentration warrant additional attention.

As this study shows, older settlements clearly have greater acreages of Amish-owned land per survey section, while larger settlements tend to have greater acreages per section. All of the settlements established before the mid-1980s display relatively contiguous sections that contain Amish-owned land, even if the Amish collectively own relatively small acreages per section. In contrast, within most of the more recently founded settlements, many sections containing Amish landholdings are not contiguous to any other sections with Amish landownership. The greatest aberrations are within two settlements with Lancaster County affiliations that were established less than a quarter century ago. Are these differences related to their Amish affiliation, their recency of establishment, their engagement in Grade A dairying, some other reasons, or a combination of several of these factors?

Within several of the studied communities—Cashton, Augusta, Wilton-Tomah, and Medford—over three-quarters of at least one survey section is owned by Amish residents, providing a far more conspicuous imprint upon the cultural landscape than most areas of Amish settlement, where non-Amish landownership predominates. Although this is only seen in several larger and older settlements, is it likely to be seen in other Amish settlements as they age and grow? On the other hand, is there some critical minimal level of Amish landownership that needs to be attained for settlements to survive? Only continued study of landownership over time can answer these questions.

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## Erratum

12/5/2022: Activated links in PDF file.