Movin' Cotton

In these days of supersonic jet transports, high-speed freight trains and powerful highway rigs, it's comforting to know there's still room left for the old reliables—in this case, two sturdy mules and a much-used wagon.

As high-speed cars zipped by, this South Louisiana farmer, with his son riding along on a super soft mattress, hauls his cotton to the gin. And he got there—not as fast as fellow farmers with pickup trucks, but just as surely.

In years past, such a scene would have been common on Louisiana's farm-to-market roads. This picture was taken in the Opelousas area. But mechanization has now hit the farm. Mules have been replaced by tractors—which don't change their mind about plowing and stop cold in the middle of a row. And wooden wagons—they have been replaced by trucks.

But some farmers cling to their old ways—out of economic necessity because their farms aren't large enough to justify mechanization, or because of tradition.

Maybe this farmer simply thinks the old way is best.