

TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE: **Jeanne Gramstorff** (JG)

INTERVIEWERS: David Todd (DT) and David Weisman (DW)

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Please note that the recording includes roughly 60 seconds of color bars and sound tone for technical settings at the outset of the recordings. Numbers mark the time codes for the VHS tape copy of the interview. "Misc." refers to various off-camera conversation or background noise, unrelated to the interview.

[Misc.]

DT: My name is David Todd. I'm here for the Conservation History Association of Texas. It's October 5th, year 2002. And we're a—a few miles Southwest of Farnsworth, Texas near the Oklahoma Texas border. And we're in Jeanne Gramstorff's home and have the chance to—to visit with her about her work on—on behalf of sustainable agriculture in general and—and in particular a—the st—struggle against some of the—the large CAFO's that come into this area. And I want to take this chance to thank you for taking this time to talk to us.

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JG: Well you're quite welcome. I—I consider it a privilege.

DT: Well thank you. We—we often start these interviews by asking something about your—your childhood days and—and how perhaps your—your family or—or some early friends might have first introduced you to the outdoors and—and to perhaps a love of nature or interest in conservation. Any ideas about that?

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JG: Well I was born and grew up on a farm in Floyd County near Lubbock. And my father was a cotton farmer. My mo—mother grew Broad Breasted Bronze Turkeys. And they went through the depression in the dust bowl and had some tough times. But they held in there and paid for that farm. And mother always had a great big garden and we always had chickens and hogs and cows. And so I was always active in some part of the fieldwork or—or the farm work. And I grew to love the farm as my family did. They took good care of the farm. They wanted it to be in good shape. So then when I finished high school I went to Texas Tech. And there I met the man who became my husband.

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And he had come from Boston to Perryton because his—his aunt was a daughter of Judge Perry and they didn't have any children. And they'd offered him the opportunity to come to Texas to farm. And he thought that sounded great living in Boston. And so he decided though he needed to learn how to do that and so he went to Texas Tech. We met there and married in—in—there and moved to Farrington. Always my family cared about the land. And they wanted it to be taken care of. They wanted it to be loved. It w—my dad was a real farmer. It wasn't that he was trying to make money. This—this was what he

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really enjoyed doing. And my brother took over the farm down there. So we're always been a family of farmers. And—and Jack and I farmed up here since 1951 and enjoyed it and

loved it. And we were probably one of the groups from the time we married we joined the Sierra Club and the National Wildlife and all of that because we love the

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outdoors. We love to go to Colorado in the summer and see the—the beautiful scenery. And we wanted it kept that way, not torn up. And so I guess we've always been the type of people who wanted to take care of the land and to preserve it. It—it's been special to me all my life.

DT: Maybe you can tell us a little bit about the—the kind of farming operation that you had as a—growing up on your—on your parent's farm.

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JG: Well my dad I can still remember when my dad had mules instead of a tractor. I remember when we got the first tractor. And—but he—he was a row crop farmer and mostly cotton. And later on he did start to irrigate that cotton farm because it became pretty important to keep it going. He took really good care of his farm. And he—he had several brothers who were farmers too and they were all very careful to take care of the farmland and to keep it from blowing. Once you've seen one of those dust storms, you don't want to see anymore.

DT: Can you describe what one of these dust storms might have looked like?

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JG: Yes well when—when—when—I—down south it was—it was sand storms because it was a lot sandier soil down there. But there would—I remember one Sunday afternoon we were coming home from my grandmother's in Matador and we got nearly home and it was so bad that we couldn't see—dad couldn't see to drive the car anymore. We had to just stop. It was just tot—we were just totally engulfed in sand storm. And he had to just stop and wait until the wind went down before we could go on home. We had a few like that up here to during the early fifties when we had a drought and the dirt was blowing

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and the farmers up here at that time were using one ways that's how they farmed with what they one ways, which is a disk plow. And when they did that they put all of the trash all of the plant life under the ground so that the dirt was just lying there. Well when that wind starts blowing and it gets that dry, I can guarantee you're going to have a dirt storm. And I can remember a few even after we moved out here in 1956 that were just absolutely horrible. So yes they had them up here too in the fifties. We had one or two last year when we got so dry. But not anything like the extent that they were then because what happened, the farmers finally got smart or a little smarter anyway. And

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decided that they would—they would use a different type of plow and so they used a sweep plow that you just swept under the—the plant life but left it on top of the ground so that it held the dirt down. And—and Jack called himself a trashy farmer because you wanted to be a trashy farmer to keep the dirt from blowing.

DT: And—and tell me something else. It sounds like your family had a pretty diversified operation. You had some—some poultry, and...

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JG: Yes.

DT: ...and cattle...

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JG: Yes.

DT: ...and well as the row crops and a garden. Can you talk a little bit about that?

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JG: Well my family in Floyd County, we were always very diversified and—and mother and dad both worked to keep us that way. And—and they had—mother had family who lived in Amarillo and other places in the cities, they'd come out in the summer and we'd have canning parties. And we'd can all that fruit and vegetables. And they would take some of it home with them. And it really made a difference in—in those days coming out of the depression, you didn't have any cash money. So it was nice to have something to eat and not have to worry about where you were going to eat this time. And so I think that's why mother and dad continued to diversify but they were still growing turkeys. Mother got pretty famous. She won prizes and all that sort of thing with the Broad Breasted Bronze Turkeys. And so they were still growing turkeys when we married. And so my husband was interested in them so they sold us their hatchery and their

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incubators and everything and we moved the turkey crop up here and—and enjoyed it. We were going to keep on keeping on. But unfortunately we had a blizzard in 1957 during the—the laying season when we were hatching out chicks and without electricity for 10 days; we didn't have any babies that year. And so that pretty much put us out of the turkey growing business. But we were diversified up here. We've had gardens—until just the last few years I had a garden in my back yard and we had fruit trees. And we loved to have these things that we grew on the farm and unfortunately you don't see

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that so much anymore. I worry about that, what we have lost by not continuing to diversify. But most of the farmers today are too busy running their tractors and the irrigation wells I guess.

DT: You're—you're talking about some of these fruits and vegetables that your parents raised and that you all have raised as well. Were any of them heirloom seeds? Were you seed savers?

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JG: Oh not particularly, we weren't that good. But we did try to grow the types that would be best in this part of the country.

DT: You also I think mentioned that—that your—your father was originally a dry land farmer...

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JG: Yes he was.

DT: decided to start irrigating. Can you explain you know the difference between the two and why he changed?

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JG: Well the reason he changed mainly was because he didn't have a great big farm he had a poor section and then bought another 80 acres, which is a pretty small farm. And the prices of the materials went—of cotton and so forth, stayed low enough that you needed to grow more of it. And so that's why he finally changed to be an irrigation farmer. Now my husband never would change to be an irrigation farmer. He stayed a dry land farmer because he said we have enough land that we can afford to farm dry land and he says I'm not going to waste this water. We've just got enough for about fifty years right now. And he

said I'm not going to waste this water growing wheat that

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nobody wants anyway. And if you've seen the price of wheat lately you realize that nobody's wanted it much. But—and so he—we just grew wheat dry land on three and half sections of land. And—and some milo and we tried a few other things but generally speaking it was just wheat and milo.

DT: You mentioned that water is pretty limited up here.

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JG: Yes.

DT: Where—where does your water come from?

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JG: From so—Ogallala. And of course that's one of the reasons we get upset when these water-using operations come into the Panhandle because they use a lot of water. And the Ogallala is—is going down rapidly. The recharge rate to the Ogallala is like less than half an inch a year and we're pulling it down at about two to three feet a year. So it's going to be gone. They—they—the optimists say we'll have it until maybe fifty years from now.

DT: You mentioned how precious water is and how its—it—it seems like it's—it's becoming more and more of a limited resource...

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JG: Yes.

DT: in this—this part of the state. Yet I understand that there's some proposals to develop well fields and export it. Can you tell a little bit about what you understood about that?

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JG: Well T. Boone Pickens came into Hemphill and Southern Ochiltree and I think maybe part of Gray County. He has a ranch down in that area and he decided it would be very good just to export that water down state and—they—they'd just pipe it down there and make a whole bunch of money on it. Well the problem that it did for the adjacent ranchers is that if T. Boone pumps it out of his place it's going to take it from their place too because Ogallala goes all the way under so it made it very difficult for these ranchers to decide what to do. And many of them said okay we'll sell you the wa—water rights. Because at least they were going to get some money out of it when they lost their water.

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And this has been a real big thing and—and T. Boone talks a big line and he encouraged them to tell them that they would get it sold he thought to San Antonio. Well San Antonio hasn't bitten yet and neither has Dallas but even so it is still in the offing that this will be shipped. Well when we only have a fifty-year supply of water and he's going to be pumping it out by the millions of gallons, you can imagine what that's going to do to that fifty year supply. It'll go down to twenty or whatever. It's tough.

DT: Why is it that there essentially I guess no regulations or limits on—on (inaudible).

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JG: Well Texas—Texas has played it kind of dumb. I'm sorry. But it's true. In Colorado you are limited to the water that you can get and they control it. The state says how much you can get. In Texas, they said oh well if you own the farm, you own the water too. And so can do anything you want to with it. The problem is it—if—if you do something foolish with it, it hurts everybody.

DT: What about these Groundwater Conservation Districts, do they have much power?

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JG: Not much. T. Boone met with them and they talked with him a whole bunch and they finally said well okay. But there really wasn't much they could do to keep him from doing it anyway.

DT: And—and is there any sort of permitting agency at the state level?

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JG: No. Not that I know of. It's strictly in—in the local areas.

DT: And how's this affect folks if they're trying to sell their land or buy land if—if there aren't water resources to...

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JG: If you don't have water if you—if they—if they can't reach water on your place, then there are a number of places—farms up here in this area that are going dry. You can't get water on them. Well it cuts the value of the land by about two-thirds.

DT: As a banker, is that something you've...

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JG: Something...

DT: ...run into?

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JG: Something we're very concerned about. Most of the places so far that have lost their water have been more in the western Panhandle not so many here in Ochiltree County. But it's—it's coming here just like here I live out on the farm and I had to drill a new well last year because I had reached the bottom of the other well. And—and I—I—I did hit water thank goodness, but in some places they don't. This Ogallala goes under all of this Panhandle; all of—part of Kans—well quite a bit of Kansas, Nebraska, Western Oklahoma and it is the chief and only water supply for this area.

DT: There are no major rivers or...

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JG: No.

DT: ...lakes to draw from?

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DT: Unfortunately. Now they do have that Lake Meredith down north of Amarillo and if you go by it right now and see that it's down from 95 feet to 75 feet, you understand that there's a shortage of water up here. And there have been complaints from New Mexico because their water in that river was coming—too much of it was coming into Texas. So they've stopped some of that from coming into Texas to keep their—their lakes going. It's tough.

DT: Well I—I just in passing mentioned that—that you worked as a—as a banker been on the board of the Perry Bank—Perryton Bank. Can you tell us a little bit about your—your career over the years?

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JG: Well it's been interesting. I guess you call it. When I first married, I became English teacher, taught in the Perryton School System for several years. And I—that's when I got really connected with library work because I found out they never had cataloged the library. So then I did that in my spare time after I quit teaching. My husband was a Director of the Perryton National Bank and—and so after he died, they asked me if I c—would like to be a director and I said yes. And so I'm the only woman director of any bank that I know of up here in this area. They're not to many women who

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get to have that job. But we some years ago they came to our bank and wanted—a big bank came and wanted to buy us out and I was stubborn and another stockholder was stubborn and so we bought all the other stockholders out and kept the Perryton National a locally owned bank. So that's what I do in my spare time. And I have worked with library for years because I've been so interested in the library and I have served on the Texas Library System Board for several times and just went off as president of that. And I am president of the Perryton Memorial Library Board and then I do United Methodist

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Church work in my spare time. I've been on conferences and—and regional offices and also in my local church. So I guess—and then I'm also secretary of ACCORD and have been since we start ACCORD in 1995. So I stay a little busy.

DW: For those of us who don't know what ACCORD is, maybe a description?

DT: Can you describe the Active Citizens Concerned over Resource Development, ACCORD?

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JG: Yes. Some years ago we had a neighbor in this area, Western Ochiltree County, who decided that he would go with Seaboard and put in two confined hog operations. Now confined hog operation the hog is always kept inside, never—never has his feet on the ground, never sees the real world, never does anything but turn around and eat and turn

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around and eat that's all he can do. Sometimes he can't even turn around very well. But anyway this is the latest method of raising hogs in—in this part of the world. And it started in North Carolina and up east and has come to Oklahoma with Seaboard. And they grow about eight thousand hogs in these—each one of these two confined animal operations, which are small actually. We have one in Ochiltree County now that has 325 to 350 thousand. And for each one of these hog operations, they have to have an enormous lagoon system. Now they call it lagoon system but what it actually is, is a

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cesspool. All of the waste is—is piped out into this pool that is open and it causes a tremendous amount of odor, a lot of nitrates rise into the air. I have had more flies in my—around here than you can imagine because the flies go to these places of course. And it causes an awful lot of problems and—and if they close these down and just leave those lagoons, then somebody has to go in and clean them out and fix them up after it's all been left. And that's what happens so often with these confined animal operations. If they close down they just go off and leave the mess, they don't do anything.

DT: Can you explain why you think they—they've come to this part of the world?

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JG: Because Texas said oh, come on in and our regulations are so terribly weak T—TNRCC which has just changed its name, Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission, they changed it to something else and I can't think of it right now.

DT: Tex Czech [slang for TCEQ or Texas Commission on Environmental Quality]?

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JG: Yeah, Tex Czech, I think. But anyway they have said we want you, we want the business, we want the economic development. And so they—the rules are just not existent. They—we did at one time when—when ACCORD started in 1995, we had the right to a public hearing. We could appeal for a public hearing. They have since denied that. You don't have

any right for a public hearing; you don't have any right to appeal. We took them to court one time and won. The only problem was we lost. They didn't—we didn't get anything out of it. Just cost us money, we won the case and that was the

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end of that. It was in a district court in Texas. So that's the way life has gone for ACCORD Members. We bu—started out as a group of neighbors because we were so very concerned. It has grown. When the Nippon Pork came into Ochiltree County and —and started their Texas farm, which consists of about 500,000 to 750,000 animals in—in various places in the county. We had a lot of other people besides just us neighbors who wanted to join us. And so we became a—a pretty good-sized operation. Then when Gray County had PSF, Premium Standard Farm coming in there, they called us and asked us what we did and we told them well we tried to do. And they said well we want to start a group too. So they are a group of ACCORD. Then over in Hutchinson County when

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Seaboard came down there and said they were going to put in a—a—a—a operation to take care of their hogs and—and they were going to put 5 million hogs in that area. The Panhandle Alliance started over there but they are related to us as well from—from Hutchinson and Sherman and—and Hansford Counties.

DT: Are some of these groups' members or are they small family hog operators?

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JG: Not too many—there aren't to many small family hog operators up here but there are a lot of farmers. And what they're planning to do over in Hutchinson and (?) County is where they have the center pivot operations, they are selling the corners off to Seaboard and they're going to build their operations on the corner of every farm. Well if you live close to one of those things, you are not going to like that I can guarantee you cause it doesn't smell very good. And so that was one of the reasons that there has been so much opposition. Probably as much because of the odor as—as anything else and there are lots of other reasons. I don't like the confined animal's situation. I think it's—it's hideous to

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do that to an animal what they do to the hogs. But there have been some people around who've had hogs and chickens and—and—and of course a lot of people raise cattle and—and graze them on their farms. But we don't have very many just active hog operations except for these confined ones. They first came into Dallam County some years ago and they're still on Dallam County to.

DT: You mentioned several times that there's a pretty bad odor...

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JG: Yes.

DT: ...attached to these operations.

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JG: Yes.

DT: Can you give us a little history of—of why it's difficult now to contest the nuisance odor?

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JG: Because the TNRCC decided that they didn't need to hear us. Now one year Rick Costa from Amarillo came up with his monitoring system when he—we'd had so many complaints. And he came up and monitored around these hog operations and he actually

found some places that were not acceptable. Now they accept more than my nose does I guarantee ya but they do—did allow that there are places especially around that Texas Farm Number 3 and—and—and also the Texas Farm Number 4 which have such huge numbers of operation—of pigs and—and hogs that there were operations that were not in compliance. But nothing was ever done.

DT: What happened to Mr. Costa? Wasn't he a...

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JG: Yeah he was with the T...

DT: ...with the (?) agency?

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JG: Yeah he was with the TNRCC. And I think they asked him if he didn't want to leave.

DT: In—in—was part of the reason why these nuisance odors haven't been grounds to object to them—is it the legislation got involved in this?

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JG: I don't—don't know just how much the legislator got involved I went down and testified before the—the Texas Natural Resources Committee of the—of the Texas Legislator and of course, Warren Chisum is Chair of that so I can tell you how much Warren Chisum was involved. He didn't really want to hear what I had to say. But when they got through with—with redoing that TNRCC they—they actually made it easier to get the permits and ta—ta—take care of the odors without—without anybody—the complaints without anybody getting anything done. So it had been easier through the years rather than harder.

DT: Why do you think the—the legislature and the agency aren't more you know considerate of your concerns?

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JG: I think they think it's economic development and—and there not very many of us up here in the Panhandle anyway and so we can't vote very much. And so they—if they talk economic develop well we'll go along with it.

DT: What about some of the local communities what have they done to attract or regulate these?

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JG: Well when Nippon Pork came into Ochiltree County with all of us kicking and screaming and hollering all the way, the commissioner's court actually gave them tax relief for the first five years. And to get them to come and I could not believe that they would do that but they did that. And this is happening all over. Dumas is offering Seaboard for their packing plant, ten miles of water piped to their packing plant would—which would be 10 miles south of Dumas and big tax breaks in order to get them to come.

DT: Did they offer of lots of investment and return or lots of jobs?

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JG: Oh they say they'll have lots of jobs and Texas Farm has hired a number of people. But they ar—pay minimum wage. What I find is the oil companies up here—the—the spa—most of them are Hispanic and a lot of them come directly up here from Mexico. But what we're finding is if they can get a job with the oil companies, they'll—they'll take it in a minute because the oil companies pay so much better than the hog operations do.

DW: Have you ever been able to get them to allow you to go on a tour inside these...

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JG: No.



DW: ...(?)?

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JG: No. I might take a terrible disease. No. Nobody is ever allowed inside. You cannot go inside any of those facilities because they say, "Well, it's too much danger of disease".

DT: Speaking of disease. Are there some health concerns about these plants?

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JG: Yes there are. The average length of time that a person can work in one of those confined operations without getting a—a—lung disorders is six to seven years because breathing that air constantly in those nitrates it—it really gets you down in a hurry. People who have allergies find them to be much, much worse because of these situations.

DT: I've—I've read more about the—the situation in North Carolina...

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JG: Yes.

DT: ...that some of the runoff from these operations causes problems in the environment that (inaudible)

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JG: Yeah they...

DT: Pfiesteria?

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JG: They—they—they've ruined the Neuse River [in North Carolina]. The—all the fish died. And Rick Dove who has been working on—he was a caretaker for the Neuse River, he's been working at this very hard. And they started that water alliance with the Kennedy family and he's—and he's still working with that. And it also contaminated the soil of the farms around and it takes a long time to get rid of that contamination. And so what North Carolina did was say you cannot build anymore until we get a better way...

DT: Sorry.

[Misc.]

DT: You discussed a little bit about the—what the nitrates do to peoples lungs? Is there any problem with nitrates percolating down out of these lagoons and into the aquifer?

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JG: Yes. Yes. It—it eventually they will reach aquifer. Of course it's a very slow percolation system. But eventually they will reach the aquifer and—and contaminate it. And there have been a few cases up in the Oklahoma Panhandle where this has happened. And that's why Oklahoma's tightening their rules about these confined animal operations because they don't want to see this happening all over their state. And that's why they're coming to Texas. Now a Dr. [William] Weida from the University of Colorado, who's an expert on—on a farming and—and agriculture spoke to some of us not long ago in Dumas and he says the next place they'll go will be Mexico. When they get us contaminated, they'll just go onto Mexico. I'm sure Mexico will be glad to have us won't they?

DT: Maybe you can help us sort of understand the difference between one of these big operations and a—a small more traditional one. Can you talk a little bit about that how they...(inaudible).

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JG: There are some small more traditional ones being tried and used. Texas Tech University came up here and they were all gung-ho for CAFO's and all this stuff until they heard some of us scream and holler. And they went back down and they're doing more of the outdoor

type with—with the—the house th—th—that they can just crawl in you know and out on the grassland and feed them extra but they have the grassland and they're not confined in small operations. And they have been pushing that for several years. Now when you go to Colorado, up the eastern part of Colorado you will see some of this type of hog operations. And—and it—it—they're free, they can move around, they're not confined in a tiny little space with no air to breathe except nitrate air and they—

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they can go look for food and they roll in the ground. I don't know whether you've been around hogs much but when I was a kid, they liked to roll around in the ground and—and—and they can do that in this type of operation. This is being researched at Texas Tech and I hope that some day we'll begin to do this. For one thing with all of these hog operations we're producing too many hogs in the United States anyway. And so the price has gone way down, really low. And I think the time will come when it's going to have to dawn on these people who—that we don't need that much more hogs. And maybe

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they will begin to go outside I hope so. I'd love to see them do it. The other thing that they're doing to try to save the contamination situation they're working on that in North Carolina is to use a dry waste system and make methane gas out of the waste and then use it for the—the—the power for this—for the operation. And this can be done. It costs a little more but it can be done. But the reason it's not being done out here is because they don't have to and they don't want to spend the money.

DW: To get your point across to your legislators who don't seem to care have you as a group taken any actions the way there were the tractorcades of the farmers in the 1980's. Have you gone to Austin and given any demonstrations (inaudible)?

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JG: We—we haven't done that I'm sorry to say we—we it's a long way to Austin to drive your tractor. And so—but we have testified before the committees and before the TNRCC and we have had the court case down in Austin. We worked with a lawyer down there and—and we've done—well Warren Chisum knows to duck when he sees me coming. So that's just sort of the way, they—they know how we feel, they're very aware of it but they don't plan to do anything about it until they have to I guess.

DT: I'd like to learn a little bit more about some of your concerns about these operations and I—one of the things that—that I'm intrigued by is if there's any affect on the meat that's produced by these operations. I mean do they have to use more antibiotics or hormones to...

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JG: Yes.

DT: ...to support these animals?

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JG: Yes they treat them very highly with antibiotics and what they're finding now in the whole United States is that children and people are—are let—are not able to be treated with antibiotics for major health disorders because they've had so much in their food. And there's beginning to be some concern that I think they're going to cut back on the use of antibiotics, particularly with the cattle but I don't—as far as I know the hog operators have not cut back at all but it is a real concern. Som—something like 75 to 80 percent of the antibiotics used in the whole United States is used on these big cam—in these big CAFO's.

And—and it's scary—it's scary stuff. I don't know whether—of course I don't  
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ever eat pork you understand. I gave that up some years ago. When I found out how those poor things were grown I just could—I just can't eat it. But I don't know how much it has affected the people but I do know that they're very concerned about it.

DT: Are they given any growth hormones like...

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JG: Yes.

DT: ...some cattle are?

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JG: Yes.

DT: What do you think the ramifications of that are?

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JG: I think it's scary and I don't know what we can do about it. Because what they're doing is—they say we got to do this because it costs too much to raise them. We've got to raise them as cheap as possible. But I don't know—it's kind of like the—the situation with the corn and the hormones that they've used with them to—to—so you don't have to plow you know and that sort of thing. I don't think we've really looked to see what the results are going to be.

DT: We can take a sort of commercial economic view on these—these CAFO's to I think you had told me earlier that some of these operations are owned by corporations that aren't based here and...

00:34:49 - 2219

JG: Yes.

DT: ...in the Panhandle. How does that differ from some of the locally own feedlots?

00:34:55 - 2219

JG: Well the biggest one here in the Panhandle the biggest ho—hog operation in Ochiltree County is owned by Nippon Pork out of Japan. And so of course all the money goes back to Japan, all the profit does except what they have to pay their workers. The other, Seaboard, is out of Boston. It's a corporation in Boston and so naturally that's where the money goes. The local—we do have local feed lots, cattle feed lots. Generally speaking, they ha—are owned by the local cattlemen. And so they raise their cattle on the grass and then put them in the feed light—lot to fatten them out. So the money stays locally. And I think that—that's one of the things that has bothered us so much about

00:35:42 - 2219

these huge confined operations that they're not local. They don't—they don't really care what happens in Perryton, Texas. They care about what happens in Tokyo or in—or in Boston but not what happens here.

DT: Well do you find that they're—that they buy any local supplies or feed?

00:36:01 - 2219

JG: When Nippon Pork came in, they sa—they built a feed mill just east of me and they told us that they would buy locally grown feeds. It's very interesting, I go by there going to town nearly every day and out of the five and six trucks that would be parked there, they're all from the Midwest. They come down from the Midwest. I do have a neighbor they called him not too long ago to buy some wheat from him because they couldn't get it anywhere else and they did buy some wheat from him. But my neighbor across the road who had been

taking his—trying to take his corn to them gave up, said poeey on you, he took—takes his to the elevator. So they are not buying locally.

DT: Maybe you can explain too how these—these businesses are structured they—did they own the entire facility that takes a—a pig from its birth all the way through to...

00:36:54 – 2219

JG: Yes.

DT: ...its slaughter?

00:36:55 – 2219

JG: Yes.

DT: And...

00:36:56 – 2219

JG: They have the breeding facilities, they have the little baby pig facilities they have—then they have the feeding facilities.

DT: Do they outsource any of their operation?

00:37:08 – 2219

JG: No.

DT: Okay.

00:37:12 – 2219

JG: No they stay totally enclosed and they won't let you go look at it either.

DT: What has been their reaction to—to your concerns when you talk to Seaboard or?

00:37:24 – 2219

JG: Well we've tried...

DT: (inaudible)

00:37:26 – 2219

JG: We've tried to get them to let us, you know, go see the operation so we kind of know what is no you're—no one is allowed, you might take some disease to their animals. So no one is allowed to go in. Now when they come to check them on the—on the nitrates and on the air when they came up from Amarillo, they could not get on the property they could get on the road next to but they would not allow them on any of their property.

DT: Even the state agency? (inaudible)

00:37:52 – 2219

JG: Even the state agency, which I thought was very interesting. Now whether the state—TNRCC could come here—come up here and go on there I don't know but they never have as far as I know.

DT: Is there a marked connection between the political contributions given by these corporations and who's actually in office in this area?

00:38:11 – 2219

JG: Interesting that you ask that because I just got information the other day that Warren Chisum who's running for reelection from my—as my representative had only two contributions from his—his district. And the rest of them have been from major corporations. So yes, you can see why the representatives are affected by what they receive.

DT: So you think the political system sort of skewed towards where the donations come from...

00:38:45 – 2219

JG: Yes.

DT: ...the sizes of those donations?

00:38:46 - 2219

JG: Of course.

DT: Have—had there been any sort of political efforts to either change these candidates minds or?

00:38:55 - 2219

JG: Well there's been some efforts to changed his minds but—but we ha—couldn't get anybody to run for the office this year there—with the redistricting and everything it's kind of been strange. But Warren Chisum doesn't even have any opposition this year. we couldn't—we tried to get somebody to run against him and didn't have any luck so he's going to be there another two years.

DT: Is this—is it—is the support for the CAFO's or opposition for that matter is it pretty nonpartisan or do you find that it's on one side of the aisle?

00:39:23 - 2219

JG: Well you have to realize when you get up in this part of the state—when I first came up here it was a democratic part now it is very solidly republican. Very solidly, very conservative I guess you'd say and they—they'll vote republican almost every time.

DW: Well where does that place you having said before that you read all this crazy left literature how does that (inaudible)?

00:39:47 - 2219

JG: They just kind of smile as I pass by cause they know how I feel. But it—it—it—it is generally speaking, all of the county offices you have to vote republican primary if you're going to vote for anybody holding office in—in Ochiltree County cause they all run on the republican ticket.

DT: Well do—do you find any sort of interesting crossovers when you—you get into these issues where there's—I guess a concern of takings and—and compensation for—for land that you can no longer occupy because the—the water's being used for the CAFO's or it's—the odors to strong to do other things or the nitrates have been contaminating your—your farm water?

00:40:33 - 2219

JG: There have been some—some—there have been some starts at trying to do something about it. But what we have found was now when Nippon Pork came in and started that big farm east of Perryton, they went to the neighbor who was next and had lived there forever and—and offered to buy his house so that they wouldn't get the static. So they bought the house from them. But he still farms that and he says he—he even on a tractor with air conditioner on he'll get so sick that he'll have to leave that place and go some place else to farm it. There have not been very many suits. Now if we were to have a major wash out from one of these lagoons, I think we could file suit in district—in federal court. But what we're finding is in the state district courts we're—we didn't have

00:41:26 - 2219

any luck and I know with the dairies down in—in Central Texas, they've own—that Bosque River they've only finally had—won one case against the dairies. It's tough to—to do this and you sure better have plenty of proof when you do it.

DT: Can you talk some about—about the linkage between these—these confined hog operations and some of the confined dairy operations? Is—is there much crossover in—in partnership between...

00:41:58 – 2219

JG: There're different owners totally but one of the things that's happening in this part of the country is the dairies is coming into the Muleshoe area. They have been in New Mexico, came to New Mexico from California cause California just got flooded with dairies and they got fined for big problems out there. So they came to New Mexico where it's high and dry. And they started some there and they're coming into the

00:42:21 – 2219

Muleshoe area, which is not too far from Hereford and the Western Panhandle. And Muleshoe's thrilled to death they say to have them. Dairies—I went to visit one of up in—in Oklahoma and—and just to see what they were like. They did let us on site, which is more than the hog operations will do. But they—they do have problems. One of the major problems is that pond and if they don't take care of those—those waters and they get into some of the creeks and so forth, it can cause a great deal of contamination. But it's still—they don't use anything like the water or do the contamination that the hog

00:43:01 – 2219

operations do, even so. Now down around that Central Texas area the Bosque River where they had so many, then they did run into problems.

DT: Why is the hog operation so much more damaging than say cattle feed lot or a—or a dairy confined...

00:43:19 – 2219

JG: Well both the dairy confinement and the cattle feed lot have the animals outside and—and free to move around at least a little bit and the hog operations they're totally confined.

DT: Is there a certain humane treatment...

00:43:30 – 2219

JG: Yes.

DT: ...issue there?

00:43:31 – 2219

JG: Yeah, there really is.

DT: Can you explore that a little bit? I mean you say you're a pretty active in the Methodist Church is that part of your reason for your concern?

00:43:41 – 2219

JG: Yes.

DT: ...moral issue?

00:43:42 – 2219

JG: Yes. Yes. I—I – To do that to an animal, this is just cruel and inhumane because these poor animals never see daylight, they never have their feet on the ground, they never get to do anything except stand there and eat and if—and most of them don't even have a place big enough place to lie down. And so they're—they're just there from the time they go into those feeding operations until they're taken to—to market. They're just there and nobody cares. Well I've had animals around me all my life and pets and so forth and I care about those animals. I want them to be loved and to know that they've got some freedom and—and these operations they just don't have a bit. It's—it's not any fun to be a hog in a confined animal operation.

DT: You mentioned that—that nobody cares and—and I'm wondering if—if you found there's much awareness of say you go to the supermarket or you talk to people who buy pork or buy milk (inaudible)...

00:44:48 – 2219

JG: How they are treated?

DT: ...what the processes are that produces...

00:44:50 – 2219

JG: I doubt most people even pay attention. They just—they don't make the connection. Maybe I'm wrong. But I—that's a feeling that I have that—that they don't make the connection. Because you know it's—looks like the same meat they've always bought and so why wouldn't it be just the same? And they don't realize how many antibiotics have been put in there and—and how those animals never got to move because they don't want them to move because they get muscle and they want them to get fat and so they can be harvested in a hurry. But it's tough.

DT: Would you think that's a function of the fact that most people live in cities now and don't have the background...

00:45:33 – 2219

JG: Probably.

DT: ...that you do...

00:45:34 – 2219

JG: Probably.

DT: ...for the most part.

00:45:36 – 2219

JG: Has a lot to do with it.

DT: And these companies do—do they maybe it's because they're—they're so confidential and secretive about their operation. They don't advertise I guess the fact that they're raised this way?

00:45:49 – 2219

JG: Oh, no. They don't. They don't—they don't say anything about that and of course when you go to the supermarket you don't know whether Premium Standard Farms or Seaboard or who sold that pork to the—to the supermarket. So there's no way that you can know actually where it came from.

DW: Are there any people in this area who are experimenting with organic or free range or anything like that?

00:46:13 – 2219

JG: There are some. We—not quite as much as I—as I wish there were. But there is some sustainable farming being done in—in—in parts of the area and I think that it will grow as time goes on as—as people how important that could be. It—I know I will give Susan Combs credit when she was in Perryton she was talking about they were working on sustainable farming in the State of Texas and were getting more communities interested. So maybe we'll do better some day. I hope so.

DT: What form of sustainable farming would take in this area?

00:46:50 – 2219

JG: In this area? It would probably be grassland, farming and also maybe some types of vegetation, some vegetables and that sort of thing. The sustainable farming like growing tomatoes and that sort of thing we couldn't so with some irrigation. But I—we could do some up here.

DT: More dry land farming?

00:47:14 – 2219

JG: More dry land farming? Yes.

DT: And—and maybe more grazing rather than ...

00:47:19 - 2219

JG: Yes.

DT: ...cultivating...

00:47:19 - 2219

JG: Yes.

DW: I believe you're referring to the person this Susan as the current Secretary of Agriculture...

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JG: Yes she is.

DW: Is that the case? And if you go back, you had Rick Perry before that...

00:47:30 - 2219

JG: Yes.

DW: ...then you had Jim Hightower before that?

00:47:32 - 2219

JG: Yes.

DW: Maybe you could comment on how each of these different administrations might have meant something different for the farmers in this area and that's a reflection of the political spectrum?

00:47:41 - 2219

JG: I think it is. Now Jim Hightower was really out to try to help the—the farmer and—and build agriculture but he wanted to do it though the family farm. And—and he was very careful that he didn't want big business taking over agriculture. Well then when Rick Perry went in, he went more and more for the organizational farming situation. And—and Susan Combs grew up on a ranch and—and I had hoped that she would be really for agriculture for the individual farmers and ranchers. But I can't see that it's changed all that much since she's been in office. I don't know maybe some day. I don't know.

DT: You mentioned how Hightower was—I guess more favorable towards...

00:48:37 - 2219

JG: Yes.

DT: ...family farms and smaller scale operations. Can you talk about how you've seen this scale of operations change during your lifetime?

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JG: Well from the small half—quarter to half section farm it—now a farmer just almost has to farm between two and five sections in order to make it. One of the reasons of course is the cost of machinery. It's—it—it's very expensive and it's—once you pay that much for it you can keep running it day and night and—and—and farm more. So the farms in this part of the country are—gotten much larger. The farmer who farms for me right now farms my three sections and he also farms three other sections of his dad's and his. So he's farming—he and his son are farming six sections of land.

DT: So there have been a lot of I guess buyouts and...

00:49:32 - 2219

JG: Yes.

DT: ...and folks leasing land...

00:49:34 - 2219



JG: Yes.

DT: ...from others...

00:49:34 - 2219

JG: Yes.

DT: Is that right?

00:49:35 - 2219

JG: Yes.

DT: Do find that there are many absentee landlords that...

00:49:39 - 2219

JG: There are quite a few absentee landlords. Even in this area there are. And—and I guess that's just going to happen. And when—when that does happen, you just have to take the farmer's word for it or else go visit at the right time of year. But...

DW: As a former English teacher who's probably seen this in literature, is it just quaint now a days to think of the romantic notion of the small farmer at the time of—of your girlhood something that would have been written about in a Steinbeck novel. Is that simply an—an idea of whose time has—maybe there—we're just a bunch of (?) not hippies what would you call it who look back with nostalgia and it's not a reality (inaudible)?

00:50:19 - 2219

JG: I—I think it almost is not a reality anymore at least in this part of the country. Now I don't know whether—the sustainable farming is trying to bring some of that back. But actually I—I don't see that happening to any great big extent in this part of the Panhandle. I think it—it (inaudible), that's nostalgia, that's the good old days.

DT: You said part of the reason maybe because of the cost and the debt...

00:50:47 - 2219

JG: Yes.

DT: ...of buying these huge...

00:50:49 - 2219

JG: Yes.

DT: ...machines...

00:50:50 - 2219

JG: Yes.

DT: Do you think that any of it is—is due to the—the low cost of the commodities?

00:50:56 - 2219

JG: Oh yes the price of wheat and grain has—has—has just been terrible for the past several years. The—it should be the fair balance price for wheat is \$5.00 to \$5.50 a bushel and we've been getting a \$1.92 up to \$2.00 and something, it finally got up over \$3.00 this year. We felt like we had it made. Only trouble was we didn't have much crop to take to the elevator with it. But yes the price has been very low. And the reason is that people—our export system—we have not been able to sell our wheat to other places because they could get it cheaper somewhere else. And so they started raising their own or buying from someone else.

DT: So a lot of it has to do with the—the trade system you think?

00:51:40 - 2219

JG: Right the free trade hasn't helped us much I tell you for sure.

DT: It's just the GAT and the World Trade Council? And you just find that—th—there's more competition because were competing globally?

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JG: Yes. Yes. For one thing China decided that if we could raise wheat they could raise wheat. And so we don't—for a long time we sold a lot of wheat to China and we don't anymore. They're raising their own.

DT: What role do the government programs have in the low prices? Do you think the subsidies have much...

00:52:18 – 2219

JG: They've had to have subsidies or the farmers would have gone broke. That's flat all there is to it. I think the new system is going to be better. Now I can't tell you for sure because when—in 1996 they went back and made this major change to the subsidy system. And what it did was hurt farmers dreadfully. And so they rewrote that this year and I think it's going to be better. In '96 we were making good prices and things looked great and so they said oh well we'll just take care of that and we won't have to do so much and it. And—and they've had to reap the rewards of that bad news too.

DT: And—and your role on the—the—the banking board do you—do you have some idea how local farmers and ranchers are doing and what their—their debt...

00:53:10 – 2219

JG: Yes.

DT: ...and their asset ratio?

00:53:12 – 2219

JG: Essentially we—we have several local farmers one of them who owns these two hog operations who are in really bad trouble; we've had several who have had to quit farming. Several who have debts that are really over their heads. We also have some who've been level headed and not—not done anything, you know, too wild who are doing okay. But we do probably have more debts that are in danger now than we've had for several years for our farmers.

DT: Well do you own—I remember reading years ago the farm aid years where (inaudible) real estate prices were dropping, this is back in the 80's and folks were in this double bind where they had taken out big loans secured by the collateral of their land and the land prices went down...

00:54:03 – 2219

JG: Went down.

DT: ...do you see that happening again here or are land prices holding pretty steady?

00:54:08 – 2219

JG: Land prices are holding pretty steady right now. There haven't been any major drops. It's the drop on the prices of commodities that has hurt these farmers more than anything.

DT: Maybe you could talk a little bit about the fact is on peoples personal families. Do they find that—that their kids are willing to stay here and—and continue in the business do they see a promise in the business?

00:54:36 – 2219

JG: Very few young farmers more of the farmer have—got white hair like I do. Now the young man who—the man who farms for me his son is—wanted to come back and farm with him and that's very unusual. You don't see that happening very much. Most of the people who grow up here on the farms go somewhere else. They get a different type of job just like our son went to Colorado and became a principal of a high school. I can't imagine wanting to do that but he did even though he did farm with us for a number of years. And

loves to farm but he said he just couldn't see it working for him in the long run.

DT: Do you have any suggestions, ideas on how you know the next generation can find a—a role to play, a niche to fill when you know it seems like a lot of the—the agriculture industry is so big and so corporate?

00:55:30 – 2219

JG: I—I think one of the things they're going to have to do is to work on the trade situation so that we can get a decent price for the—for the things we produce. When that happens, I think more and more people will want to stay in the farming business because it is a great way to live I'll tell you for sure. I'm glad I am one even if—even if it has been hard every once in awhile.

DW: What are the special—what—I grew up in this city here to be you know patch of green (inaudible). I mean what is special about—about that—that farming feeling that (inaudible)?

00:56:05 – 2219

JG: Well the freedom you have you don't have to do 8:00 to 5:00 you probably do 8:00 to 10:30 or something like that. But also the—the feeling of seeing something grow and knowing that you—you have producing something that is worthwhile for people. And I—most of the farmers that I know really love to—to work the soil, to see that they can do a good job and that it is something worthwhile for the world.

DT: I guess there's something very fulfilling about feeding people.

00:56:36 – 2219

JG: That's right. That's right.

DT: I'm wondering if—if when you're looking for advice about, you know, where to go and—and what the future might be, are you getting much help from any of the traditional sources the County Extension Agent, the Land Grant Colleges, any—any sort of outside advice that you've found is worthwhile?

00:57:06 – 2219

JG: Well our County Extension Agents are both very good and—and very helpful. And they have various workshops through the years so that we can keep up—well you have to keep your license so you can use pesticides and that sort of thing and they have those. And they've managed to bring in some good information along with that. And then the Land Grant Colleges, well just like as I told you, Texas Tech had been working on—on growing hogs out in the open. They're doing some of that and they're doing some down at West Texas A&M. They are doing to some to try to help farmers. There is a—a farm near Amarillo that West Texas A&M has—has been working with to develop—showing the development of new crops and the opportunities and that sort of thing.

DT: What about any of the traditional suppliers and the folks that sell you seed or sell you chemicals or fuel. What's their role? What's their view? Are they any help?

00:58:10 – 2219

JG: Oh I have not dealt very much with them. Now maybe some of the irrigation farmers have dealt with them more I don't know. I just think they're in it for the money.

Unfortunately I guess that's what we're all in it for. I get a number of farm magazines and there's always information in that about various products and what's going on but not too much localized information.

DT: When do you get this sort of general national information whether it's through a magazine, journal whatever do you—do you feel that the—the challenges that you're facing

with low commodity prices or with CAFO's that they're unique to this area? Do you find (inaudible)?

00:58:58 - 2219

JG: No I—I think they're not unique to this area. Now the CAFO's we have been invaded by more than any place else s—s after Oklahoma started clamping down. But the prices even in the Midwest, it's just been terrible for the farmers there as well as for us. And the cotton prices last year since I still own a part of a cotton farm, I can tell you the prices on cotton last year were just absolutely just horrible and they've gone up very little. And the reason is places like China are buying their cotton other places. They're not buying it from the United States anymore.

DT: Do you have thoughts on how that can be reversed? I mean, you're talking about these trade problems...

00:59:41 - 2219

JG: I don't know. For one thing they—the garment factories especially with cotton, the garment factories are in these countries that pay very low terrible wages and can get by with it that way. So they can sell the stuff cheap. Well what happens when you go to your garment store here in the United States, about 90 percent or more of the garments that are made came from Thailand, came from Mexico, came from China, came from somewhere besides the United States. So we're not doing business with the people at home either way.

DT: So you find that—that a lot of the money is sort of going off the farm whether it's going to the chemical producers or to the—to the corporations that might own...

01:00:30 - 2219

JG: Yes.

DT: ...some of these operations...

01:00:31 - 2219

JG: Yes.

DT: Is there anyway around this to sort of keep more of the money in the Perryton National Bank, into the Perryton Community?

01:00:42 - 2219

JG: I would hope that there is. I think some day it's going to dawn on us that the people in United States have the highest standard of living in the world and we want to keep it that way. And in order to do that, we're going to have to supply ourselves and buy from ourselves rather than going other places. And I think when they do that they'll change the trade agreements a—a—a which have been so lax and—and maybe—maybe we'll do better, I hope so. Reckon I can live that long?

[Misc.]

[End of Tape 194]

DT: Mrs. Gramstorff?

00:01:21 - 2220

JG: Yes.

DT: While we were off camera, we were talking a little bit about what you see as some of the consequences both short term and long term from these CAFO's and how few people understand all the possible ramifications. Can you maybe give us a little bit of understanding of that?

00:01:39 - 2220

JG: Well I'm—I'm very concerned about them. For one thing when these CAFO's came into

our county, one of the things that we of ACCORD did was we went to the commissioner's court and also to the CAFO operations and said we want these to be bonded so that if they do close down there will be a clean up. Well nobody thought that was necessary. But what has happened across the country is when they do leave and move on, well the water gets low or, you know, they have some problems or the state gets tight on its regulations so they go to Mexico or whatever. They just abandon these and they're left sitting there from then on with nobody to clean them up.

DT: The lagoons?

00:02:22 - 2220

JG: The lagoons are—are—and the barns. They may fall down but they're not going to get taken apart and cleaned up. So this is one of the things that I see in the long term that's going to be very hazardous. Also it's going to leave people without jobs and many of these people are low income, low education, we're hoping to get a bunch of them—their kids educated anyway but even so this is a—a—a group of people who don't have very many possibilities. And so it's going to leave people in the towns with no jobs and no way of making a living. And—and this is scary stuff. I don't like to think about this

00:03:03 - 2220

happening to my hometown. So we're going to have to work to try to do something better to see that these operations d—aren't l—let to go and leave everybody hanging. And I don't know how we're going to do it.

DT: Do—do you think that if—if some of these companies do go out of business or—or move elsewhere that it'll leave the finances of the county or city in trouble?

00:03:31 - 2220

JG: Sure. Tax support goes down and—and it hurts, that's right. And especially if you have a lot of people who need special education or who need bilingual education and—and you can't provide it. Now our Perryton School System this year is in real trouble tax wise because we've got so many students, we've had a very problems, and they've had to raise the taxes and I don't know whether we're going to make it or not. It's—it's—it's not—we haven't seen our taxes go down a bit since we've had all these big operations come in. As a matter of fact even the county went up in taxes this year. So it—it not—it has not made a difference to the people who are already living here.

DT: Do—Do you think part of the reason is because of some of the tax rebates that were...

00:04:17 - 2220

JG: Yes.

DT: ...provided?

00:04:18 - 2220

JG: Tax rebates don't help a thing. I...

DT: What was the extent of some of the—the tax for—forgiveness (inaudible)?

00:04:27 - 2220

JG: Well they were forgiven for five years on any taxes on any of their buildings and the operations—it started total o—complete rebate and then it went down for five years until finally after five years they ha—were supposed to be able to pay their taxes. So this is actually with Texas Farm—this is actually the first year that they have paid full taxes since they came in. And we still had to raise taxes in the county.

DT: Do they get any sort of a discount on their—on their credit? I mean do they get federal farm loans?

00:05:10 – 2220

JG: Well all of these major operations are—can get special credit from—from the federal government. Yes. We tried to get that taken out of this farm bill this year but those of us wrote letters didn't write loud enough I guess. So they do get subsidies through the government.

DT: Even if they're foreign-owned?

00:05:32 – 2220

JG: Even if they're foreign-owned.

DW: Sounds like if you've had a half-century here on this farm. Although you smile and laugh, I'm wondering as you've seen your city shift, does it make you more sad, more angry, more frustrated? At a half a century of—of—of farm life, how are you feeling about that now?

00:05:56 – 2220

JG: Well I'm—I'm worried about it and wh—and—and I'm also aware that that's one of the reasons that my son didn't come back and farm. That he could see the changes and—and he didn't think he wanted to—to—to take a chance on those. So I am very concerned about it. I keep wondering if within time all of the farms will be owned by corporations rather than individuals, that it may just be just a corporate farming country. I—I don't want to think that but I have a struggle wondering how else the farmers are going to manage.

DW: What do we lose as a people if it becomes a corporate farm culture?

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JG: We lose our independence; we lose the fact that we have something that we own, that is ours. I—I guess that's very important to me since I do own this land. But I—I just can't imagine living in a place where you didn't own anything for the rest of your life. And—and for farmers, the ownership of that piece of land has been very important.

DT: Well do you think it—it is a future sort of like our past where there are a lot tenant farmers? Do you think it's cycling back to that?

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JG: To tenant farming? It may—it may, I don't know. I wouldn't be surprised. Just like the farmer who farms for me owns land but he also rents my land because he needs more land in order to make a living.

DT: Do—do you see any optimistic prospects? You mentioned earlier that—that there is some leverage with companies, like I think, it's McDonalds...

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JG: Yes.

DT: But it may be another that...

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JG: Some of—some of the Sonic and some of the other fast food operations are now saying that they are not going to buy meat that has been treated with too much antibiotics, that they—they're concerned about it. So I can see there is a little hope every once in a while. Bt then you turn around and up in Idaho where they're bringing in Dairies, the Sierra Club was putting ads in the newspaper to tell people hey look out at—about this you need to be concerned. The newspaper called the Sierra Club and says we're cutting you off, you can't put—they're paying for them. But you can't put any ads in our paper. We're just going to let ever—we're not going to tell everybody all this stuff that you

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know is m—m—is Sierra Club Members. We want these dairies in and so apparently the corporations are paying off people to keep this information from getting out. Tough stuff.

DT: Have you found it difficult to get the word out in your—your community or statewide?

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JG: We—yeah in a way we have found it difficult in Perryton people wanted to think it was just going to be good business. Now in Pampa they took a totally different view when they tried to come into Pampa. And they voted out the Pampa EDC and—and—and all that. They still don't—have one hog farm that they're going to get they think but they really did turn things over in—in—in Gray County. So there are some people who are making a difference but it's hard and it's—and it's never a fun thing to do.

DT: Maybe you could tell a little bit about the—the story in Pampa—the Pampa EDC is the Economic Development Council?

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JG: Yes.

DT: (inaudible)

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JG: Yes. They were bringing in these two hog operations, Smithfield Farms. And the people in Pampa did not want them. For one thing, one of these operations was to be located right down where the Ogallala comes nearly to the top of the ground. And it wouldn't be long till there would be some seepage into the Ogallala and so and—and they didn't want that kind of business coming into Pampa, which is pretty nervy of Pampa because they have been hurting for business. But anyway they called a vote. They ha—still had the opportunity to vote out the Economic Development Corporation because

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there's a limit of time when you can do that apparently. And they had a vote and voted them out. And all of a sudden the Pampa leaders were—decided they might need to listen to these folks. And so they—one of the hog farms decided that they were not going to come in w—w—without some economic development help. The Economic Development Commission has to pay off some debts but then it is voted out and the people of Pampa talked about going to court against the other operation and decided it was just going to be so expensive that they wouldn't yet. But they have done a lot of

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work down there and they have made a difference and a few of the other towns around there looked at that and thought woo maybe we better be careful too. I don't know. I hope so.

DT: Well that's a hopeful sign...

DW: Sounds like the Jim Hightower story doesn't it?

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JG: Yes I guess it does. And I don't know any of them who would say they were Jim Hightower people.

DW: Well that's interesting because that's one of the things Jim Hightower said is that most people are not pinned as left or right...

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JG: That's right.

DW: That they're just exactly the kind of people who share common goals...

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JG: Yes.

DW: common dreams just sort of scratched beneath the surface of...

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JG: Right.

DW: ...the pragmatic populists you'll find people who share the same thing. Have you found that kind of camaraderie among your colleagues?

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JG: Yes. I—I—we don't ask each other whether we're republicans or democrats, we just know what we're fighting for and that we'll keep on—keep on keeping on. That's all we can do. And it's discouraging even though we did everything we possibly could here in Ochiltree County to prevent these operations from coming in, we didn't succeed. So the best we can do is to keep them knowing that we're still here and they better tow the line or—or something could very well happen.

DT: Well what's your advice for you know young people or people who'd be new to—to an interesting issue like this? How should they proceed?

00:12:17 - 2220

JG: I—I've been interested in—I didn't know that we were so well known around the Panhandle until these other op—operations started coming in. But I've been interested in—in how many people have contacted us from the various different communities wanting to know what to do and how to do it. And—and I think that's probably one of the better ways to talk to people who have been through the process and—and we've tried to go help them. We've tried to get them in touch with the people they needed to be in touch with, and—and I think that even though it's—looks it—it doesn't look great, I do think its making a difference and I do think these hog operations recognize that there is somebody watching them. And that's important that they know that—that they're not going to get by with doing whatever they want to. Somebody's going to talk.

DT: We usually conclude these interviews with a question about a place in the outdoors that you enjoy going that gives you pleasure. Is there some place that comes to mind?

00:13:22 - 2220

JG: Well all the years that we were raising our family we always went to Durango in the summer time and enjoyed the Colorado Mountains. There is a place though here in the Panhandle, a couple of places that are very important to me. One of them is down South of Amarillo. It's our Methodist Camp down there and it is a beautiful city and I always enjoy going back down there and feeling that I have been near God and—and—and peaceful for a while. Another one is between Perryton and Pampa. The river there and the mesa, it is a beautiful place. And then we have a Lake Fryer here in Ochiltree County that we developed years ago and did a good job of developing it and it is a very lovely

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place just to go be outside. Of course you've been to my house so you know that I can just go outside and enjoy it everywhere around me too. And I love to and I love to be able to do that here living all by myself here in the country I like it. It's quiet and nice and—and it's special.

DT: You said that's it's, you know, peaceful and—and pleasant for you but it also you mentioned that it brings sort of closer to God. What do you mean by that?

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JG: The creation part of it I think is so important that we—somehow we forget that we



didn't create the earth. That—that this is something that God did and we are put here to take care of it. And if we don't take care of it, who will? So I guess that's what I mean when I g—g—g—I get especially at ca—the Methodist Camp. I—I get that feeling particularly.

DT: Well thank you, it's been very nice to talk to you.

00:15:08 - 2220

JG: Well thank you. I've enjoyed it.

[Misc.]

[End of Reel 2220]

[End of Interview with Jeanne Gramstorff]