

Interviews

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Interview with Cindy Grassbaugh

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Cindy Grassbaugh

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Andy Legant
3/28/95
ANSO 67-68

Interview with Cindy Grassbaugh (second daughter)

Thursday Afternoon. February 27, 1995. 21461 Schenk Creek Rd.
Mount Vernon, OH 43050

-Counter 642-

AL: Let's get started here. What are some of the things you do on the farm or have done over the years.

CG: Basically I just feed the calves. I used to milk. I don't milk as much now with Dwayne being home all the time. but when he was in college I milked. Basically milk and feed the calves and odd jobs that they need me to do.

AL: And do you think there was a progression of kind of chores or responsibilities that as you reached, not so much a specific age, but like age 7 you started or age 10 or whatever you started doing the calves or was there kind of a specific age or a specific...What am I thinking. I guess I am thinking if someone were raised on the farm is...like when I was growing up I hit a certain age and I started doing dishes, I hit another certain age and I started taking out the trash and doing dishes and another age and I was always feeding the dog. And you kind of get more responsibilities as you get older. Do you see yourself...have you started doing that?

CG: Feeding calves we did when we were little. That's...I mean we all loved going outside and feeding calves. That was...now as you get older I am on the go a lot more. I think if my oldest brother wasn't back from college that I would have more responsibility in milking. I guess that's the big thing when you have brothers and sisters you all share the responsibilities. The boys they have more responsibility than Anna or myself or Mary. They do more of the field work. And when you were little you made the lemonade for the guys. When they unload hay. And now you can go out and help but we don't. There is more responsibility but there is not like a set age limits or its just when they need the help you help.

-Counter 673-

AL: What are some of the advantages you see of growing up on a farm?

CG: Well the advantages...Um I mean you could answer all those little questions. Those dumb little questions that everybody has. Like today I was teaching ag in the fourth grade and it was kind of funny there not dumb questions but they are little questions you think are funny and everybody else has no clue. I mean you answer those and just responsibility and work ethic. A lot of people think you

know. Oh they don't have to do anything. Or they do everything.

But you know you learn to give and take and you learn that when something needs to be done you do it or as best you can. Um...To take care of animals. I mean the big thing was 4H for us I meana you learn responsibilities, to care care of them animals. And to know that I can't just get up and leave and never come back. You have to take responsiblity and see if Dad will feed the calves, or if Dwayne will feed the calves if someone will feed them because you just can't let them starve. And you just can't throw a bunch of food at them and hope that like a dog...you can just put food in front of a dog or whatever....But reponsibility has been the biggest thing.

-Counter 690-

AL: Have you been involved in various fairs and that stuff, calves and raising animals?

CG: We start 4H in third grade. So I have been 4H since 3rd grade and this is my 10th year. And then through FFA I have been with FFA for 4 years. And 4H we did with the calves...we did calves basically just took calves and beef cattle and veals and then like sewing and cooking and all that stuff. But through FFA I have had the opportunity to travel all over the place. I have been to Georgia and I helped with the Georgia flutter leave, Kansas City, Missouri to the national FFA convention, National leadership conference with state officers in Kentucky, and I am trying to think of where the other places.....

(Dale Grassbaugh comes in and sits down) DG: Youll be going to Oklahoma this summer.

CG: Yeah I will be going to Oklahoma for the national soil judging contest. And I was able to go to Massachusetts for the big E. I mean just traveling stuff through FFA. Also through FFA I have had the opportunity to raise boiler chickens. That's something new for me. Did good though I enjoyed that. Just the different contests that you get involved in and the different people you meet. And I think through FFA like public speaking and different things like that.

-Counter 708-

AL: What about kind of opposite of that the disadvantages of farming?

CG: Well disadvantages are that you just can't get up and leave you know. You can't get up and go. And the big thing is family vacations like a lot of people have a family vacation every year. I think the family vacations we have had they relate to farm. Dad on the Nova convention...I think the past ones I remember we go to wherever

the Nova convention is because Dad needs to be there and that is our family vacation. Or you take the little. You can't get up and take...you know if there is a birthday party at grandma's house you can't go. You have to have someone to feed or not everyone can go.

Also cows take 365 days a year which is blah you know. Some days you just want to lay around the house. Some days you just want to go shopping all day or whatever you want to do. And you can't do that. But there's advantages and disadvantages of being raised on the farm.

AL: Do you like...I have been raised in mostly cities and so I come to Gambier it being this nice small community, country environment.

And it is a lot different. And I can see how this would be a very advantageous area to grow up in. And to live in. Do you feel that also. Or are there times when you would rather have...I guess the city being Mount Vernon or Columbus?

CG: Well I am going to college at OSU main campus. I guess I am going to Columbus for college so. But yeah I enjoy being in the country. I don't see how people have houses right next door to each other. Here every little word you say. And I don't think I could handle that. Having like the openness and being able to roam around...I mean you don't have to worry with crime, killings, drive by shootings as much. Different things like that. I enjoy living in the country. I guess I am going to Columbus because I have to. You know got to go to college and that is the place I think I get the best education.

-Counter 742-

AL: Do you feel that maybe that hampered you in any way? Or that as you...have you experienced any times where there was really something that you wanted to do but it really wasn't offered in this area or maybe like friends or stuff like that...they've done other things because they've been in Mount Vernon or been in the cities.

CG: I guess the thing you miss here is I mean I don't...You miss like the neighborhood. You know the little blocks that you can walk around. You can walk to town. You can walk to the store. You can walk somewhere and I guess it has pampered me because I hate going.

Like I am scared of Columbus and people walking down the street and things like that. I guess being in the country you don't have to worry about crime and all that and that's the big thing that I think I have been pampered with. You kind of miss out on all your friends being right here. It's like in Apple Valley it seems different in Apple Valley but here if you go out to houses you've got to go places. There you can go places and be with your friends down a couple houses you know or whatever.

AL: In this area are there...do you see a lot of family farmers?

CG: I guess family farms...in 4H all the people I meet through there are basically farms. Some are little some are big. But they are basic family farms. But then you see in Apple Valley that is all recreational. There is a lot of both I think.

AL: As you were growing up...I kind of got the idea a little bit that you tend to stay on the farm a little more. When I was growing up and I would go out to play or go over to a friends house or I pretty much stayed in the house. Because we never had a huge yard to do stuff in. Do you do more things on the farm?

CG: When I was little yeah. Because I think it would be different if I didn't have...Like me and Anna are a year apart. But that's one of the disadvantages when we were little. You couldn't go Mom I am going over to Susan's house and walk there and have it be like two blocks down or wherever you had to walk. And uh...you stay on the farm a lot more. And I guess when friends come over you know when you are little you can rampage around the whole country. And Mom...you know a few worries but usually she doesn't have to worry about getting shot. You can play and have clean fun I guess.

AL: What is some of the stuff that you did?

CG: Oh we like four wheeling. Like you would go out four wheeling all over the place or just go in the woods. I mean when we would have friends over we'd go in the woods.

DG: Down in the river.

CG: Oh yeah we got the river spot down there and we'd go down there. Me and my friend we go down there and lay out and do things like that. But when we were little I remember we would have parties and most of the kids don't go to the woods. And don't normally get the opportunity to go to the woods. We'd go over there and we'd build little fires and we'd boil water and cook food over there. And just do dumb things. And a lot of kids like to play in the hay mound. I mean that was a big thing. We used to get a big stack of hay, jump off the top of the hay mound and slide down the hay. Build forts in the hay mound. That was a big thing when all the cousins came over. You'd have like the whole barn full of tunnels and everyone would be crawling in and out of them. Corn fights. Things like that. Playing in the river. We'd play baseball and softball and volleyball.

AL: Do you foresee yourself in the future going into farming?

CG: Not farming. I don't want to have to be tied down with cows and things like that. But I want to be a teacher in ag-education. That's why I am going to OSU. And I hope to be able to come back here and teach. I hope to stay in the rural community or even venture somewhere where I can educate the public on agriculture. Being a state officer I have had the opportunity to go around. I mean you go to cities and a lot of kids think their milk comes from the supermarket. The local Big Bear and they don't know that there is actually a cow behind the milk. I want to educate those kids. And a lot of people amaze me on what they think and where they think their food comes. But I hope to just educate people. I don't like being tied down 365 days a year. I like to go when I want to go and as the parents can tell.

DG: Well there is nothing wrong with that. And I feel very strongly that way. And you might when you get away from it you might find out that it aint as bad as you think. And I think you'll find out that some of the things that you blame on the farm or feel is the farm's fault. But as you grow and get a job and responsibility you will be tied down and committed to too. I know that you feel that way and I think you have a right to feel that way.

CG: I think farming has got to be inside. There are some people like Dad and Doug. I mean they like that and they like doing that. But then there is like me and Anna. Well Anna is a little more down to staying here but I don't...I mean I enjoy it but I like to be able to do what I want and go where I want to go and be on my own. I guess now...but when I am out there I will probably be like no I want to go back.

DG: But don't you feel Cindy that the farm has given youlike all the plaques there a lot of them are yours. That the farm has given you the opportunity that other people don't have.

CG: Oh yes. Most definitely. I mean people hear me complain about the 365 days a year thing. But it has given me a lot of opportunities. I mean golden opportunities. I mean one for instance that I would never have been able to touch is my state FFA office. I mean through that I have travelled all over the U.S. I mean all over the United States. And just judging contests and recently I was in the ag-sales contest and I can put that down on my resume. And people like wow...she's had experience doing this. You know she won a contest through it. Things like that. I mean your opportunities aren't

limit through a dairy. And the kids at school always tease me...Oh Cindy why did you get that scholarship because you are a dumb farmer and all this" but people don't understand that there is a lot of opportunities through the farm that you don't get anywhere else.

-Counter 873-

AL: Sounds like what you what to do as far as being an ag-teacher and with what you were saying with where the milk comes from that a lot of people don't know. That is one of the same things that we are trying to do now. Almost the exact same thing of trying to make people more aware of what is going on...where things come from. What do you think are some of the major misconceptions?

CG: From children, adults?

AL: Either.

CG: Well I think a lot of kids don't understand what it takes to make milk and don't understand that if it wasn't for the farmers they wouldn't be alive. I mean you got to have the farmers to do anything. Because almost everything in the world is related to agriculture. I mean you could name unlimited things and it is through agriculture that made it possible. I think that's the biggest thing. It's just people don't understand that farmers. Without them the world is impossible. I think that would be the biggest thing I think.

DG: Well like I have told Anna. I feel that people take us for granted. I think they feel that there is always going to be some body out there. And I don't think they realize the work that we put the hours in. You know some people talk and oh my lord they had to work over time this week and had to work fifty hours. Shit fifty hours for us that there is a hay day. And I think the government and everybody seems to take that for an advantage knowing that we will do the extra. The productivity of agriculture is...there is no industry that has touched what our productivity has reached. Back then 16 percent in agriculture did nothing but raising the food. And now we are down to 2 percent. I think that is where Cindy. And I am really tickled that Cindy feels that way. And I think we need people to go out and do that. And I think that this is one of the things that more farmers have got to do. And a lot of farmers that I talk to don't like to do it. But I think we have to get our story across because we are such a limited number. To state legislatures. Environmental groups things. Decisions to be made. We don't have the folks and the numbers to go out there and do it. We have got people that got to remember that they have got to keep us going even though it don't relate to them. Just like you. You have got to keep us working so you have got food and fiber at a reasonable cost.

AL: I was just thinking. It is kind of an awareness that people don't have but...seeing as how I grew up in the city but I never had the opportunity to even learn of any of this at all until I came to a small in Gambier and started looking around me and them through some of the opportunities that started opening up through school and basically through this project. So it wasn't something that I was intentionally not being aware of. But it was just something that I never come in contact with. That I never heard anything about. So it was difficult for me to see where you all are coming from not having any contact with anything.

CG: I think that's the thing that kids don't understand. I know through me filling out differnt college financial aide and stuff. They look at the farm and say oh you got a big house you got a big barn you got all this machinery you got a bunch of cows. They think oh you've got all this money but they don't...kids don't understand how much money it takes to make a farm work. How much of it you need to...you need the machines you need a barn. They are necessities. And it is not that you have a lot of money it's what you need to make your business run. I think that is a lot of things kids don't understand.

AL: It seems like unless they come into contact with somebody who is telling them this stuff it is difficult for them to learn it.

DG: Well hasn't it been difficult for you to realize the investment that a farm like this has got.

AL: definitely.

DG: It's mind boggling. This is something that has always tickled me over the years. A doctor or a lawyer will buy a farm and they'll get startted in it and they will have two or three hundred thousand dollars. And I have had one or two of them say well I want to get invested I have a couple hundred thousand dollars. That's just enough to get you in trouble real good and bad.

AL: I use to think. OK I know the price of what a car cost and I'd think well how much can a tractor cost. It can't cost much most than a car. But now I realize how much everything cost. And until you start talking to people and getting aware and a little involved you don't realize it. But then once you do you start saying how could I have been so uninformed and ignorant for so long.

End of tape (interview ended)