

TRANSCRIPT: STAN BEVERS INTERVIEW

Mr. Stan Bevers · Ranch Management Consultant

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An interview with Mr. Stan Bevers, a ranch management consultant and former member of the Texas Agricultural Extension Service. Bevers is a 1989 Masters in Agricultural Economics graduate from Texas A&M and an inducted member of the Tyrus R. Timm Honor Registry.

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Could you please introduce yourself and tell us about your career?

My name's Stan Bevers. I got a master's degree here at Texas A&M in 1989. I came to Texas A&M kind of as a non-traditional graduate student because I had finished teaching vocational agriculture for 5 years in northwest Oklahoma, came with my wife and we had 2 children at the time, ages 2 and 4. So, I really wasn't a traditional grad student, but I knew I wanted go back to grad school, so my career, once I finished my master's degree here, the Texas Ag Extension Service offered me a job back in Vernon, Texas, which is only 35 miles from where my wife and I we both grew up at. So, I ended up being, through the stages, I ended up being a professor and extension economist at Texas Agrilife Extension Service. I spent 27 years doing that. I always enjoyed working in the cattle industry. I got to know the guys that were running the ranches. And over the course of 27 years, you know, I learned to do financial analysis on a ranch. At the same time, there were people that influenced my direction in like, say, in terms of how to analyze ranches, and there were a lot of reduction analysis, but from a financial standpoint there wasn't anybody really doing anything from a financial standpoint to determine whether a ranch was still well, profitably or not. At the same time, we had a lot interest on branches outside of Texas. So long with my job with Texas A&M, I also had a lot of outside consulting outside Texas on ranches anywhere from New Mexico to Montana. So, that kind of gave me a reputation throughout the country, so after 27 years with the Extension service, I decided to retire, but now created my own company. It's a ranch management consulting company. Ranch KPI, which is key performance indicators, where I basically do is now for the private standpoint, working with the ranches, helping them identify their strengths, weaknesses, doing strategic planning for them, and it keeps me busy.

What do you value most about your experiences at Texas A&M?

You know, when I was here at A&M, again, you know, I wasn't the traditional grad student, I had a wife and 2 kids, what I really valued about A&M is when I came here. You know it's one thing to come as a 18 or 20 year old student and it's a whole another to come back after you've been in the industry for 5 years making money and then come back, you know, to graduate student wages with 2 kids and a wife. Probably, you know I'd like to say the education and all that, but the thing that I value the most, was a couple of the professor in the ag economics department, really took me under their wing. And from a personal standpoint, I... my wife and I have a daughter, that's a special needs daughter, and at the time we've... we didn't have a good evaluation of her condition, well at the time a couple of the professor in the Ag economics department that I was interviewing with to get a teaching you know research assistant job had children that also had some needs. And ...uh... what I value the most, again, was those professors saying Stan, you need to get your daughter, whether you come to A&M or not, you need to get your daughter down here, near Houston, so you can get her evaluated, and so I'd love to say it's my education and all that, but I think everybody talks about the spirit of Aggieland, and there is the spirit of Aggieland, because again it wasn't so much the standpoint you know we'd love to have you here as a grad student you've got experience and blah blah blah, but were here to care for you, you know, I mean this is what we think you need to do from a personal standpoint, and I have valued that greatly. Now, second sure, phenome they gave me an education and you know I'm overwhelmed with what I've been able to do and it's all because what I got here at Texas A&M. You know, again, the camaraderie, fortunately at the time my wife and I came down here, there was 2 other couples. A matter of fact, there was another couple that actually came at the same time that is now the department head of Mississippi State, so he's done quite well with his A&M degree as well. We were both Ag teachers in very – in different states, but we came down as married couples, and there was a group of us that went through grad school as married couples. That, you know, again it's the camaraderie, it's the spirit of Aggieland that really, really excelled here.

Do you have any advice for Agricultural Economics students who are about to graduate and start their careers?

Don't be scared of anything, even though ... or even though were anxious and – and the world at times will seem like it will eat you up, call one of your friends, keep your faith, things will work. You know, nowadays, there's so much in social media. You know, I don't want to say remove yourself from the trivial

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things, remove yourself from you know, from... from the bad side, I guess, of social media because it can be a great tool. I mean I...

What has been the biggest challenge in your career, and how have you faced it?

You know, the biggest challenge is an easy question for me, believe it or not. Again, the biggest challenge for me is balancing family and work. As... and, and, and anybody that's going to try to really excel will face that same thing. It's... it's really exemplified when you have a special needs child, because if I leave for a week and my wife has to take care of not only the children, she's also gotta take care of a special situation. So, that's a easy question for me, and, and I think anybody that, you know, that... and for the most part we're all very, you know, we're conscientious of our family life. You will find as you get more successful, that balance becomes more difficult. So, when it's time to buy roses for your wife, don't hesitate. Buy two dozen instead of one. Okay, because they... they don't get love enough, okay? Find, find that balance, that's the biggest challenge for me. And I recognize what I have at home. It took me a while to do that, you know, and again that was the challenge. It took me a long time, and, and my wife will still tell me, "You don't say 'no' enough". You know, it took me a good while to find that balance and, you know, I mean as any young family could find out, you better find it real fast or else you won't have a family at home. And so it's a challenge to find balance.

What is your proudest accomplishment within your career?

I, I guess my proudest accomplishment from my career is a collective answer of what I believe I have done for ranchers in the country. I.. and when I say collective, its because, not only have I sat across kitchen table from an individual ranchers' standpoint, and helped them through some areas, you know, whether they were facing difficult times, low prices, high cost. So, it's a collective, you know, nature of, of whether they were individual or kings, whether, you know, I would be at, let's say I'm at some Texas Southwestern cattle raisers conference and be speaking to, you know 250 people back to back and yet, have the audience feel like they can still call on me on a first name basis, and yes, I did give them my cell phone number. But I always said, "lets please be gentle with that. You, know here's 250 of you in here, please be careful with my number."

So my greatest accomplishment has been collective across what I think I... what I think I've done for the cattle industry.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

You know, I, I do appreciate my time at A&M, my goodness. I can remember my father in law, again, my wife and I had not been married, married for 5 years when we moved from Northwest Oklahoma, and came down here to College Station. And it was, you know, it was a big, that was a big move for 2 country kids, you know, that, that had been out on their own teaching Ag. But I can remember my father-in-law wanting to be kind of upset that we were moving farther away, and that we were moving our grandkid-their, his grandkids from 3 hours away to 7 hours, but he has since told me that," Stan when you told me you were going to Texas A&M for grad school, I didn't tell you, but I was damn proud." He said," I knew about that university because my dad, my father-in-law was raised in Waco,"... or around Waco. And so he knew what Texas A&M was about. I don't know that I knew everything about Texas A&M when I came down here. Again, I came down here not only for an education, but also to take care of my daughter. He did, and he told me, he told me "When you came to Texas A&M, I didn't tell you at the time, but I was super proud of you". And, so I took that to heart. I've, you know, I've enjoyed it here, I love coming back to A&M, I love A&M baseball, and so, you know... Gig 'em Aggies. You know, I hope to come back

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