

TRANSCRIPT: ERNIE DAVIS INTERVIEW

Dr. Ernie Davis · Former Extension Economist, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

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An interview with Dr. Ernie Davis, former Extension Economist with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension. Davis is a 1971 Agricultural Economics graduate from Texas A&M and an inducted member of the Tyrus R. Timm Honor Registry.

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Dr. Ernie Davis | Transcript
Tyurus R. Timm Honor Registry | Department of Agricultural Economics | Texas A&M University

Please introduce yourself and tell us about your career.

I'm Ernie Davis. I joined the department in 1967 as a graduate student, and in 1971 I became a livestock marketing economist and worked in that position until 2004, and in 2004 I retired. They brought me back to be the Director of the Center for Equine Studies

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

People. People. People and faculty, staff, the producer groups I worked with over the state and nation, and producers, individual producers. So, that was a pleasure being able to form those friendships and ties, and those are the things that last you all your life.

What impact has your degree from Texas A&M had on your professional career?

Well, quite a bit. Without it, I couldn't have had the career. Time—kind of the PhD was a requirement, prerequisite to the job.

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

I think actually retirement and the transition from one job to another, and that was... fortunately, I was on four boards of directors when I retired so that kept me busy, but it's just a big change. And you miss the people you work with, people you met and all that, and starting up a new career.

What is the proudest accomplishment within your career?

Oh, I think CATTLEX, who was the electronic marketing for feeder cattle that we developed. Got a \$670,000 grant in 1979—that was a lot of money back then—and developed a computerized, automated market for feeder cattle that we ran on the mainframe computer at A&M, then. It probably had less capacity than a laptop now, but that's what we did. We ran it for two hours every day, Monday through Friday.

Besides hard work, what does it take to be a successful professional?

Networking, partnerships, listening, got—and respect for the other persons. You've got to be a good listener; it's very important. And you can't do it by yourself. You can never do it as good by yourself as you can with partners and networking.

What kind of goals do you continue to set? How do these help you to grow?

I'm right in a 80 cow ranch so Red Angus, Santa Gertrudis, so my... my biggest goal right now is keeping all the equipment operational so we can maintain an operation.

How do you balance your career with your family life?

We're together all the time. At the ranch, we built a five bedroom home, five bedroom four and a half bath, so our kids and grand-kids come out there during the holidays, so it's easier to do when you retire.

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

Listen. Same as...same networking, partnerships, group, group working.

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