

TRANSCRIPT: **J. MICHAEL MARTIN INTERVIEW**

J. Michael Martin · Entrepreneur

TRANSCRIPT

An interview with Mr. J. Michael Martin, Owner of Rio Queen Citrus, Inc. Martin is a 1987 graduate from Texas A&M and an inducted member of the Tyrus R. Timm Honor Register.

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Mr. J. Michael Martin | Transcript
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Could you please introduce yourself and tell us a little about your career?

My name is Michael Martin, class of '87, Texas A&M. My career began immediately following my graduation. My family has been in the produce business for 42 years. I immediately became a part of the family business, soon as I finished my degree here.

Could you tell us a little about your experiences at Texas A&M?

My experiences at Texas A&M were fantastic. Have great fondness, great memories of my time here. It was a great time for our, for our football team and exciting time for Aggies. I made great friendships while I was here and have maintained a number of them. One of them being Ed Rister, who I've stayed in contact with all these years and really appreciated that, that relationship.

Can you describe your early career?

My early career right after graduation began on the farm. I was a farm and ranch management focus agricultural economics, and I immediately took over responsibility for managing our family's citrus orchards and also managing orchards for absentee owners, our investors who didn't live in south Texas but invested and owned property there. So, I was responsible for maintaining and managing the orchards and growing the crop.

In your opinion, what does it take to achieve success?

There are so many things that I can think of that are, that are needed, but you can really narrow them down to just a few things. One of them being drive and ambition. I think you have to have goals and you have to know where you're going and where you want to be, and it takes drive to stay on that path. Another one that I think is extremely important, and it doesn't matter what business it is, is integrity. You have to always, always live up to your word, whatever it is. You have to do what you say, and you have to say what you do, in my opinion. In developing or earning that reputation can take a lifetime, but it can be lost in just a few days. So, I think you have to stay true, true to yourself, true to your customers, true to your neighbors, whoever, whoever that might be. I think those are really, really keys.

What advice do you have for student of Agricultural Economics?

Advice for students of agricultural economics: have passion for what you do. Whatever it is that you're setting out in front of you, whatever your life path is, you need to love what you do. It shouldn't be just a job. It should be a career. You should look forward to getting up every day and going and do what it is that you do. And again, it doesn't matter if it's agriculture or engineering or business of any kind, it really doesn't matter, but have passion for what you do. And strive to be leader. Strive to be a winner. Be involved in you community. I think, I think there's so many things that could be mentioned here, but passion is a big one.

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How were you able to manage time for family, work and other priorities throughout your career?

In the produce business, we say we work hard but we play hard. Because it's a seasonal business, we have extremely busy times, when we might be working 50, 60, 70 hours a week. But then in the off season, things calm down and it gives us an opportunity to step away and spend extra time. So, I think that's part of also the drive to be successful. You do what you have to do when you have to do it, but find that balance and set aside time. As, as – as much as you can because family needs are extremely important. I think business is important too because it's what gives us the ability to enjoy our family even more, in my opinion.

What are your thoughts on being selected to the Tyrus R. Timm Honor Registry?

Well it's quite an honor. I really didn't – didn't – wasn't expecting this. I was being pushed along a little bit. I – I tend to be, tend to be a little quiet about these kinds of things. It's not something that I broadcast to the world, but I almost – I'm very humbled. I almost, at times, am not really sure why I'm worthy of this, but at the same time, I appreciate the recognition and the honor, and I'm going to use this as a springboard to, to give back to the university and to the department as much as I can.

Thanks for watching!

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