

## **Rita and Greg Drake (and Greg Drake II)**

Ginny Willoughby: Do you think that- Do you think that the public understands what farmers do?

Greg Drake: Well, probably not because...you know

Rita Drake: No, no, I don't think so. I think it- I probably think it sounds easy to most people. You know? Throw a few seeds in the ground, and you [laughter]

Ginny Willoughby: You get something.

RD: Right. But no, there's no way that they understand the long hours, time. I mean, you can't really plan for anything, much. You learn that after a while you get used to it, and you know how to handle it, but, it's tough, when you can't make plans, and you don't get to go do the things maybe somebody else is doing. And you have to go out at night and check the corn. I mean, it's all kinds of stories, you know. Get up in the middle of the night and go out check the corn and see if it's drying in the grain bin right. Now everything is becoming more automated. But, we can't hardly accept that because we've learned, we did it for so long-

GD: The hard way.

RD: Taking turns going out in the middle of the night and that kind of thing. And I don't know, I don't think people can understand that.

GW: When you say that you can't plan for anything. What do you mean by that?

RD: Well, like certain trips, like I always really wanted to go to the mountains in the fall when it's so- which it's beautiful here, too. I mean, I appreciate my view, beauty on the farm. But I always kind of wanted to go to the Smoky Mountains during that time. But we're always harvesting. So, you know. That's one thing I miss. [laugh] And that's just one, there's a lot of things. We do a lot of things, but it's got to be a certain time that we can do it. Not during planting season and harvesting season for sure. You gotta be available.

GW: You got to work around-

RD: Correct.

GW:...everything that's going on.

RD: Exactly. Just like I told you, I guess it was you I talked to, about when we were setting up this appointment. Well, let's hope it rains or whatever.

GD: It rained last night or we'd be...

RD: We may not have talked to you.

Greg Drake II: Yeah, if it hadn't rained last night, you might have been doing half of this interview in the combine, with him running the combine.

RD: Exactly [laugh] And that's right. I mean you just, you have to let it become- it just has to come first.

GW: So farmers have to be flexible.

RD: Oh, definitely. Yeah.

GW: Do you have any stories over the years of when you had to be flexible?

GD: Yeah, you get up Sunday morning to go to church and the cattle are out. Something's happened to your grain dryer, you got a bunch of hot corn that you gotta get the fan on them or you know there's just lots of things. [RD: They've all happened.] Yeah.

RD: And one that I think about- talking about flexibility. Thanksgiving?

GDII: That was the one I was gonna have you tell her about [laugh]

RD: Oh my. Of course, Thanksgiving. We've always, you know we want our turkey and dressing, just like everybody else. And we were working on Thanksgiving, I don't know what year it was, but what- was it tuna fish sandwiches? I've almost forgot what we had. We had to have it out in the field. [GD: Yeah{laugh}] Was it tuna fish sandwiches? [GD: Yeah {laugh}] I think it was. It was some kind of sandwich and I think it was tuna fish sandwiches. And you know we thought about all the other families. Everybody was having turkey and dressing and here we were.

GDII: Why were y'all still there? Why were you not with the family where everybody else was?

RD: Well I don't know. Why wasn't we?

GD: Because we had crops to get in.

RD: Yeah, that's why. Yeah, we were working. That's why.