

Speaker 1:

All right, so we are recording. So tell me a little bit about yourself?

Jennifer Johnson:

Okay, my name is Jennifer Johnson and my birth year is 1963. I currently live in rural Hardin County, Iowa, and I grew up on a farm in rural Grundy County, Iowa.

Speaker 1:

So when you were a kid, Jennifer, how did your family come to live on a farm in Iowa?

Jennifer Johnson:

Well, as far as I know, my great, great-grandparents moved here from Germany, and built or settled in Grundy County.

Speaker 1:

And that was the family farm?

Jennifer Johnson:

Yep.

Speaker 1:

All the way through when you grew up?

Jennifer Johnson:

Yep.

Speaker 1:

How cool. And do you have a favorite story from growing up on the family farm?

Jennifer Johnson:

Well, I probably have a couple. One was playing in our huge grove of trees, so we would build... My brother and sisters and I would build tree houses. And then also we had this huge tree, don't know what kind it was, but we called it the windy seas. And it had a huge branch that came close to the ground that we could actually climb up on and bounce up and down. So we just... Yep.

Speaker 1:

So aside from the trees and the grove, what kind of crops did your family grow on your farm?

Jennifer Johnson:

Corn, beans and oats.

Speaker 1:

Full trifecta.

Jennifer Johnson:

Yes.

Speaker 1:

And then did you guys do livestock as well and have animals?

Jennifer Johnson:

Yep, we had cows, pigs, sheep for a time, and then of course dogs and cats.

Speaker 1:

Hopefully not the dogs and the cats, but were any of these items raised for your own food on the farm?

Jennifer Johnson:

Yes, both the cows and the pigs, we would've butchered. And then also my mom had a garden, so we would do beans and peas and radishes and all those kinds of things, sweet corn and all that good stuff.

Speaker 1:

And that wasn't for sale, that was just for your family use?

Jennifer Johnson:

No, that was just for us. Yep.

Speaker 1:

Family use. And in all of that, even though you were a kid, did you have to do farm work?

Jennifer Johnson:

Yes, I always helped. I had to help my mother with the gardening and then snapping the beans. And of course then we also did applesauce from the apples. And then I did help my dad by driving the tractor while he was bailing hay.

Speaker 1:

And how old were you when you started driving that tractor?

Jennifer Johnson:

I was probably 16.

Speaker 1:

16?

Jennifer Johnson:

Yeah, I was older. Now, my brother would've probably been 10. But no, I thankfully didn't have to do things that early.

Speaker 1:

And so you had a tractor for bailing the hay. Was there any other cool machinery or technology that you guys used?

Jennifer Johnson:

Well, let's see. This was the 70s and 80s. So no, I mean just your basic combine, your baler, your plow, back in the day, nothing real exciting, no.

Speaker 1:

Exciting stuff. And then are any members of your family still farming?

Jennifer Johnson:

Yes, my brother, and I have two nephews that are still farming, and also my son is helping out with them as well.

Speaker 1:

So they would have a little different story to tell if we interviewed them.

Jennifer Johnson:

I'm sure, yes.

Speaker 1:

Give us our number we'll...

Jennifer Johnson:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

We'll bring them in here. So thank you for doing this interview with us, Jennifer, and taking the time to stop in. And hopefully this will be used for research in the future, and the state will keep it on file in the heritage record. So again, thank you so much for sharing your experiences with us.

Jennifer Johnson:

All right. Well, thank you for asking.

Speaker 1:

All right.