

Speaker 1:

All right, so...

Pam Gronau:

Oh, brother.

Speaker 1:

We're taking Pam and Lawayne Gronau.

Pam Gronau:

Right.

Speaker 1:

I'm going to start with our first question. Okay. So how did your family come to live on a farm in Iowa?

Lewayne Gronau:

My dad was born and raised on a farm over by Kiron, and then when he married my mom... He worked for my grandpa and he married their daughter and then he moved over here to north of Schleswig.

Speaker 1:

Okay.

Lewayne Gronau:

He was a farmer all his life and his whole family was farmers. And she grew up in town so she didn't know.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, that's what you told me.

Pam Gronau:

I was a town girl.

Speaker 1:

But you learned to be a farm girl when you moved.

Pam Gronau:

I did learn to be a farm girl.

Speaker 1:

And what was your favorite story about growing up on a farm?

Lewayne Gronau:

Oh boy, that's a tough one. I think it's probably the fun we had making hay with all the neighbors and shelling corn and otherwise fun. I was the only boy and only one sister, so there wasn't much playing time or we played but we didn't.

Speaker 1:

Right.

Lewayne Gronau:

But it was just fun raising little pigs and stuff and just things like that. And you could run around and nobody bothered you and just...

Speaker 1:

That's what you wanted. Right?

Lewayne Gronau:

Right. That's what I wanted.

Speaker 1:

Is there anything else?

Pam Gronau:

My favorite story? Oh, boy. Oh, boy. Probably just that we raised our kids on the farm and they could have friends come out and do all kinds of things outside and...

Lewayne Gronau:

Shoot fireworks legally.

Pam Gronau:

Yeah, they did fireworks. Yeah, that's probably it. Just having the kids grow up on the farm.

Lewayne Gronau:

It was good to have a farm dog. He'd tend to be in the house and stuff. And when you came out every morning, there he sat waiting for you to go out to do chores and stuff so...

Speaker 1:

How many dogs did you have?

Lewayne Gronau:

Just one.

Speaker 1:

Just one.

Lewayne Gronau:

One at a time. Yeah. Yeah. And they were never a boughten dog. They were always strays or somebody gave us one.

Speaker 1:

Right.

Lewayne Gronau:

They make the best dogs.

Speaker 1:

Exactly.

Pam Gronau:

Tell her your dog story about cutting the leg off.

Lewayne Gronau:

Oh yeah, I was cutting hay and she never brings lunch out. This day she did with my daughter and had a little brown dog. I don't know what kind it was. I'm not sure. But all of a sudden I heard this screaming, there was this yelping. Here I cut the legs off of it with a sickle mower and I had to go home and shoot him because I couldn't do anything about it.

Speaker 1:

Yeah, I can't let him.

Lewayne Gronau:

That was sad.

Pam Gronau:

Yeah.

Speaker 1:

Yeah.

Lewayne Gronau:

And my dad always had just corn, and oats, and hay. They didn't have many beans in those days, but now when I farmed I had beans, and corn, and hay. Once in a while oats, but not very often. So we usually had our hay used about four to five years and then time to plow it up and make more oats, put more oats in.

Speaker 1:

So what kind of animals did you raise?

Lewayne Gronau:

Well, a lot of hogs and cattle. Not a lot of cattle. Wasn't a big cattle feeder, but a lot of hogs, a lot of sows. I went from farrow to finish, so we raised them from little pigs. I mean when they were born to the day they went on their truck and they were the mortgage lifters I would say. They made good money and the turned around was fast. In six months they were all gone and sold.

Pam Gronau:

And we had chickens.

Lewayne Gronau:

Oh, yeah.

Speaker 1:

Wow. How many of them?

Pam Gronau:

I came from town to living on a farm to get 300 eggs a day from the chickens. We had to wash the eggs, candle the eggs if we sold them to people. Had crazy roosters in there. I know. Yeah. It was different once I got out on the farm.

Lewayne Gronau:

But you did that on a farm. You had chickens, you had... We never had ducks and stuff, but a lot of people have ducks and things. We didn't do that, but...

Speaker 1:

Just chickens and cows.

Lewayne Gronau:

Right.

Pam Gronau:

And hogs.

Lewayne Gronau:

And hogs. A lot of hogs. And we had always a big garden when I was a kid. Plant a lot of potatoes and you'd dig them up and put them in the basement and the next spring you'd take the rotten ones out. And I had a big garden. My mom had a lot of strawberries growing up and we raised a lot of your own food. You know, your beans, and your peas, and things like that and we did the same thing.

Speaker 1:

Raising your kids.

Lewayne Gronau:

Yeah, a lot of tomatoes and cucumbers.

Pam Gronau:

Cucumbers, tomatoes. I canned them.

Lewayne Gronau:

Kohlrabi and things like that.

Speaker 1:

So you canned and stuff?

Pam Gronau:

Yep, I did a lot of canning. Pickling. Yep. I like to do that.

Speaker 1:

Did you pass that on to your kids?

Pam Gronau:

I don't think so.

Lewayne Gronau:

They always want to know, "Can I get a jar of pickles?"

Pam Gronau:

They love the red-hot pickles, but they don't know how to make them. But yeah, I enjoy canning and pickling.

Speaker 1:

So who did what kind of work on the farm?

Lewayne Gronau:

Well, she took care of the house. And so before too, we had milk cows years ago and we milked them by hand was here, so they went when my mom got knocked over and broke her arm, the cows went. And what we did on the farm was you put your crop in, you plowed, and you disked and a lot different than it is nowadays. And you plant it, and then you cultivate it, and you mowed hay, and you made hay, and then you combine. Or we picked a lot of ear corn because we didn't have a combine, but then we'd have some of it combined and...

Pam Gronau:

I had to help with that when the cribs got full or I had to yell, "Stop," so the guy running the elevator could stop.

Lewayne Gronau:

And then all you're hauling the manure and stuff like that. It's a good life. It was a good life.

Speaker 1:

Oh, yeah.

Pam Gronau:

And I always had to be around in the afternoon because once the men had dinner at noon and then they had to have lunch in the middle of the afternoon. So it really kind of tied me down for a long time. I didn't get to see a lot of my kids' activities, but I always had to have that lunch in the afternoon.

Speaker 1:

You got to eat.

Pam Gronau:

That's right.

Lewayne Gronau:

Right now my son lives in Des Moines and my daughter lives in Des Moines area and there's nobody farming anymore.

Pam Gronau:

Number eight.

Lewayne Gronau:

I moved this last week.

Pam Gronau:

Seven. You forgot seven.

Lewayne Gronau:

Oh, I forgot seven.

Pam Gronau:

Farm machinery.

Lewayne Gronau:

Oh, yeah.

Pam Gronau:

What kind of farm machinery or technology did you use?

Lewayne Gronau:

Well, we were pretty old-fashioned. I mean we had the plows, and the smaller tractors, and no cabs, and it was cold or windy.

Speaker 1:

Hot.

Lewayne Gronau:

And mounted corn pickers. We didn't have the combines in those days. We had a pull type combine to do the oats and stuff. Had a hay baler, of course, and we did our own baling. And now they got pretty nice stuff and they can cover a lot of ground and in those days you always had to come home and do chores yet before it got dark.

Speaker 1:

And use your animals. Right?

Lewayne Gronau:

It's way different now. Nobody has livestock anymore. Not very much anyhow.

Speaker 1:

So how many members in your family still farm?

Pam Gronau:

Zero.

Lewayne Gronau:

They all live in the big city. But there was only two kids.

Speaker 1:

Right.

Lewayne Gronau:

And I sold my acreage when I moved to Schleswig seven years ago but I kept the land, the farmland, and I rent it out to a young farmer and he does a great job, and he's from a great family, and they all work together I think. Otherwise, and I don't really miss living out in the country.

Pam Gronau:

You don't?

Lewayne Gronau:

I love it in Schleswig.

Speaker 1:

That's awesome.

Lewayne Gronau:

Nice small town. You don't have to drive any place to get anywhere. And I just wish we could have our cafe back and things like that, but it's kind of a ghost town otherwise. But otherwise, the people in town are nice and you can go to join community club and you don't have to drive to town all the time. And other than that...

Pam Gronau:

I was the town girl and I was the one dragging my feet to move to town because I really liked my old farmhouse. It was old and big, but I really liked it. But once we got to town, it's very nice living in town.

Lewayne Gronau:

We live on the golf course. I've kind of lost interest in golfing, but I still live on it. We watch them go by and everybody's pretty friendly out there. They wave. Other than that, I don't know what else to say.

Speaker 1:

Is there anything else to add to?

Pam Gronau:

I don't either, right now.

Lewayne Gronau:

Well, you know, the wife is important on the farm. Even if she... I farmed two miles away and I needed a ride home.

Speaker 1:

And you need food.

Lewayne Gronau:

Because we didn't have cell phones.

Pam Gronau:

Food, yeah.

Lewayne Gronau:

So I think...

Pam Gronau:

And when he gets stuck in mud, I have to pull him out and I have no idea what I'm doing on a tractor.

Lewayne Gronau:

The fun part, watching her help sort hogs. That was not a good thing.

Pam Gronau:

That was not fun. I quit. They had our little three-year-old son out there and he was getting yelled at like crazy sorting hogs. I said, "That's it." And I took off back to the house. Men that go totally berserk when they sort hogs, let me tell you.

Lewayne Gronau:

Well, that's what all I can think about for these questions. I had one story I can tell you about.

Pam Gronau:

All right.

Lewayne Gronau:

I had a black lab, it wasn't a full purebred, but my oldest granddaughter went out to look at the little pigs and she liked him. We got about halfway back and she wanted to go back and look at them and said, "No Brit, you can't go back there." And that dog kept blocking her and that dog knew what I said and would not let her go by him.

Speaker 1:

Aww.

Lewayne Gronau:

So just things like that are so much fun.

Pam Gronau:

Wouldn't let her fall off the deck. He would be in front of the steps so she wouldn't go down the deck. And Lady, they were friends, Lady and Brittany.

Speaker 1:

But you really didn't train him?

Lewayne Gronau:

No. When that dog tried to block her, I didn't know what he was doing at first, but he wouldn't let her go back to the hogs. Says, "No, we not go back there." Then he blocked her.

Speaker 1:

That's great.

Lewayne Gronau:

I don't really have anything else to add, I don't think.

Pam Gronau:

I don't think I do either. Pretty much sums it up, I think.

Speaker 1:

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Thank you greatly for doing that.

Lewayne Gronau:

Okay, well you're welcome.

Pam Gronau:

So what's going to happen with this now, did you say?