

Flint Hills Ranching Impact Oral History Project, Phase I
Partially funded by the Kansas Humanities Council
Salas Interview, August 2007, Final

1 **Interview conducted by Bill Smith; Recorded on Marantz 660 Digital Recorder;**
2 **Transcribed by Bill Smith**

3
4 **Track 45**

5
6 **Bill:** This is Bill Smith. I'm here with Frank Salas... I don't believe that is how you
7 pronounce it...

8
9 **Frank:** Frank Salas... is Salas.

10
11 **Bill:** Salas. Thank you very much. We are working on the Flint Hills Ranching Impact
12 Oral History Project... partially financed by the Kansas Humanities Council... We're
13 always supposed to give them credit...

14
15 **Frank:** Right.

16
17 **Bill:** ...for this opportunity. Frank, tell me where you were born... and, perhaps, what
18 year... Where you were born, and the circumstances. It's a little difference than most of
19 us here.

20
21 **Frank:** OK. I born in Chi.. , Mexico... in the mountains, on my grandpa's ranch... in the
22 mountains of Chi... and the name of the town is Buenaventura, Chi... In 1963, is when I
23 born.

24
25 **Bill:** 1963. How do you spell the name of that town?

26
27 **Frank:** Buenaventura is a long name...

28
29 **Bill:** Long name...[laughter all around] Write it right there. Just write it along the bottom
30 there. [Frank writes name of town on sheet of paper.] Then I'll have that one spelled
31 correctly. I spent eleven years in Tucson, so Chi... is very familiar to me.

32
33 **Frank:** [Finished writing] Buenaventura, Chi...

34
35 **Bill:** Very good! And you worked on the ranch, and you said earlier, your father worked
36 on the ranch.

37
38 **Frank:** My father used to work on ranches in Mexico, all the time, on my grandpa's
39 ranch, then we moved from there. After I born, they moved, my father, my family, moved
40 to a different town. Yes, like a hundred miles away from Buenaventura. And they work
41 on a big hacienda, ... a big ranch, ... hacienda, a big rancher. And, my father used to do
42 work from dark to dark, you know, on a horse... gathering cattle, doctoring cattle, and it
43 was mainly the things that they do everyday...

44
45 **Bill:** All the normal ranching business...

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46

47 **Frank:** Ya, and then... When I was eight years old, we went back to Buenaventura.

48

49 **Bill:** Ok.

50

51 **Frank:** Started to school there, you know, and there... went all the way to
52 commercial/academic in Buenaventura, and graduate... started working in Mexican
53 National Bank.

54

55 **Bill:** When would this have been, that you started working in the bank?

56

57 **Frank:** That was in '79.

58

59 **Bill:** Ok.

60

61 **Frank:** '79...and... I'm sorry, '78.

62

63 **Bill:** '78

64

65 **Frank:** '79 and '80, that was when I quit, and came over here, so...

66

67 **Bill:** So, your father was already here.

68

69 **Frank:** My father... when I was in school, my father was already here... in Wyoming...
70 working on a ranch in Wyoming... which was Mr. Clair Hutchinson's friend.

71

72 **Bill:** Ah!

73

74 **Frank:** And, this rancher in Wyoming, he was ready to... he sold the ranch. And, my
75 father was ready to go back to Mexico. At that time, Mr. Hutchinson showed up there,
76 with his friend, and visited with him... and find out my father is going back to Mexico.
77 And say, well, Lorenzo... the name of my father... Clair say, Lorenzo, why don't you go
78 for me in Kansas. Then, my father agree, and so he start working for Mr. Hutchinson.

79

80 **Bill:** And what was your father's name?

81

82 **Frank:** Lorenzo.

83

84 **Bill:** Lorenzo.

85

86 **Frank:** Lorenzo Salas.

87

88 **Bill:** And when would this have been, that he came over here, do you recall?

89

90 **Frank:** That is 1980.

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91

92 **Bill:** In '80.

93

94 **Frank:** Yes. And then... in that time... when my father moved from Wyoming to
95 Kansas... I was in Mexico... just got off from the bank.

96

97 **Bill:** You were getting off about the same time as he was coming over here.

98

99 **Frank:** ...at the same time he was coming over here. So, I visited with my father... and
100 he said why don't you come over here... and we can try something at the ranch...this
101 area... and work around the area.

102

103 **Bill:** Did this ranch have a name?

104

105 **Frank:** Here?

106

107 **Bill:** Ya.

108

109 **Frank:** It was... the Wafford Place... the Wafford Ranch.

110

111 **Bill:** The Wafford Ranch.

112

113 **Frank:** ... right here in Council Grove.

114

115 **Bill:** Ok.

116

117 **Frank:** By Council... the lake...

118

119 **Bill:** It was Clair Hutchinson's property?

120

121 **Frank:** Right.

122

123 **Bill:** You say it was 10,000 acres?

124

125 **Frank:** Not this one. This one was like... 3,000 acres.

126

127 **Bill:** 3,000 acres.

128

129 **Frank:** Then, through the years... we was working at the ranch... between the ranch...
130 and the construction for Mr. Hutchinson... he own the Neosho Construction Company...
131 And, between working a few months on the construction, and a few months at the farm,
132 at the ranch...

133

134 **Bill:** I was familiar with... I know him as a construction man... I didn't realize he had a
135 ranch, too.

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136

137 **Frank:** From there... 1986, after we workin' back and forth between construction and
138 ranching, you know... he asked me a question, he say... Frank, do you want to settle
139 down in Council Grove, or do you want to go on the construction site, you know...
140 everywhere... all over the United States... because they got a lot of work. And, it was
141 kind of interesting for me... to kind of stay out at the ranch. So, he say, well if you decide
142 to stay at the ranch, I'll let you have the... my OTHER ranch... because he had another
143 one... the one that is the 10,000 acre ranch... south of here...it is by Kahola lake...
144 Hinchman Ranch... is the name...

145

146 **Track 46**

147

148 **Bill:** Hinchman?

149

150 **Frank:** And I... I decided to stay here, you know, and settle down here in Council
151 Grove... the Flint Hills...and help to manage the ranch.

152

153 **Bill:** Wonderful! How long were you at that ranch then?

154

155 **Frank:** From '86 to '99...

156

157 **Bill:** ...to '99.

158

159 **Frank:** Yes, sir.

160

161 **Bill:** Let's go back then to when you first came here, when you came up to where your
162 father was working with him... you said you had not ranched, yourself.

163

164 **Frank:** Not in Mexico. Not at all... I just came over from school.

165

166 **Bill:** You had been a banker...

167

168 **Frank:** A banker... and came of over here and worked farm and construction.

169

170 **Bill:** You were working on both of them.

171

172 **Frank:** That is right.

173

174 **Bill:** You were just trying to find yourself.

175

176 **Frank:** That is correct, and it was when I moved to the Hinchman Ranch, in '86, that I
177 started learning about the ranching, roping, working cattle... knowing more of the Flint
178 Hills... more ranchers around... more people... it was interesting. It is beautiful, the Flint
179 Hills. I mean, the Flint Hills are special area.

180

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181 **Bill:** What are special about the Flint Hills to you?

182

183 **Frank:** It's so much different... area or place. Because the grass... the green grass, the
184 rain, the weather. Some places where I have been is so dry, you know. We had trouble
185 with cattle, especially with the weather, you know... so dry. You have sell half your
186 cattle to feed the other half... there's so many problems.

187

188 **Bill:** That's a key element.

189

190 **Frank:** Right. The Flint Hills, since I been here... it has rained every year. Once in a
191 while you will have a dry year. But since I been here, it has been beautiful. Its been nice
192 grass, nice everything. People have treated me so nice. I've had no problems with
193 anybody. I like... all the way from Wichita to Marysville, Kansas City, Topeka, you
194 know, parts of them...the area that I've been in, through the years, it is all nice and
195 beautiful... to raise kids, cattle,...business...

196

197 **Bill:** Council Grove has been your home town?

198

199 **Frank:** Council Grove has been my home town since I came here.

200

201 **Bill:** How far is the Hinchman ranch from Council Grove?

202

203 **Frank:** Its twelve and a half miles south of Council Grove.

204

205 **Bill:** OK, so it is real close.

206

207 **Frank:** That's real close. This is where my kids born, here in Council Grove, raised them
208 at the ranch.

209

210 **Bill:** How many kids do you have?

211

212 **Frank:** Two girls and a boy.

213

214 **Bill:** The oldest one I hear is a girl, we talked about her...

215

216 **Frank:** Well, I got a older boy. I met Martin in 1986. He was 5 years old. He's my wife's
217 boy. ...when I met my wife. He is twenty-five years old now. He was born in Mexico.
218 My two girls born here.

219

220 **Bill:** The older one is at Emporia State.

221

222 **Frank:** Julie's at Emporia State.

223

224 **Bill:** I, of course, take particular interest in here [laughs]

225

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226 **Frank:** That's right. When she born, when she was a little girl... Mrs. Hutchison, which
227 was... she passed away and ...Mr. Hutchison's first wife... she always carried Julie
228 everywhere, to the ranch, to Donna's on Saturday and Sunday, we have a lot of pictures,
229 a lot of records. It was kind interesting, when we lost Mrs. Hutchison... after that,
230 everything kind of changed a little bit. We were still at the ranch, and everything,
231 working for Mr. Hutchison, he gave me the opportunity to learn more and more.

232

233 **Bill:** I guess we ought to mention your other daughter's name, to get it in here.

234

235 **Frank:** My daughter, Anna, born in '88, born in Morris County hospital, here in Council
236 Grove... raised at the ranch, the Hinchman Ranch. The bus picked them up everyday, to
237 come to Council Grove. I knew so many people, through the years... Mr. Tom Moxley,
238 and ...

239

240 **Bill:** They would have been a neighboring rancher?

241

242 **Frank:** A neighboring rancher...

243

244 **Bill:** Off to the east?

245

246 **Frank:** We worked together... to the north east, yes

247

248 **Bill:** So you worked together. What kinds of things might you have worked together on?

249

250 **Frank:** Most of the time when we work together, is when we get the cattle... out the
251 grass... shipping cattle...once in a while we help in doctoring cattle... we helped to
252 doctor cattle. We went from ranch to ranch gathering all the cattle... like in July time...
253 when it is time to ship them the cattle out.

254

255 **Bill:** Get them out... Do you have mostly feeder cattle that you brought in, or do you
256 have a cow-calf operation to?

257

258 **Frank:** We had a small group of cows...cow-calf operation, like 300 cows for Mr.
259 Hutchison... and we also...

260

261 **Track 47**

262

263 **Frank:** ...through the years... since '88,... in '86, '88 into '90... I help him to build a
264 little feed lot.

265

266 **Bill:** A small feed lot?

267

268 **Frank:** A 5000 head capacity feed lot.

269

270 **Bill:** Sounds big to me! [laughs] Comparatively I guess 5000 head would be small.

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271

272 **Frank:** Right. So, through that time, we had about 300 head of momma cows, and about
273 5,000 of yearlings... cattle on feed.

274

275 **Bill:** So, the cows you kept on the grass year-around?

276

277 **Frank:** Right. Yes, sir.

278

279 **Bill:** ...and the yearlings are out just for...

280

281 **Frank:** For ninety days, or... one hundred twenty days... it depends on the program. And
282 we bring them to the feed lot to finish them... and ship them out to IBP, used to be IBP...

283

284 **Bill:** Tyson?

285

286 **Frank:** Tyson... used to be IBP before Tyson... or nationals... or where ever happened
287 to be... where ever the market was favorable.

288

289 **Bill:** You mentioned the ninety to hundred twenty days... I've been fascinated, from
290 other interviews. You only put the cattle on... the middle of April... and they stay on
291 until the middle of July... or something like that?

292

293 **Frank:** That's double stock, yes sir, ... ninety days.

294

295 **Bill:** What's the difference?

296

297 **Frank:** Well, its different programs, ok? It can be ninety days, a hundred twenty days, or
298 you can have it year-round. But the difference is... double stock, it takes two acre per
299 head; on a hundred twenty, it takes three or four acres. On a whole year... let's say, on
300 the cows, I always give them, like, ten acres per pair.

301

302 **Bill:** Per pair?

303

304 **Frank:** Per pair. Because I want the grass not to be hurt; you know, I don't want to hurt
305 the grass... the land.

306

307 **Bill:** Can't over graze.

308

309 **Frank:** I don't want to over graze it. And we usually, when we go ninety days on
310 yearlings... I don't want to put [use] no more grass after that; it will be grazed,
311 completely; it needs nicely to recuperate.

312

313 **Bill:** They need the rest of the year to recuperate to be ready for the next year.

314

315 **Frank:** ... for the next year.

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316

317 **Bill:** So these groups of cattle are grazing on different patches of land – that’s why you
318 need so much land ...

319

320 **Frank:** So much land to graze

321

322 **Bill:** So you can rotate around...

323

324 **Frank:** ..and we do on the cows, the pairs, the momma cows... we give them plenty
325 grass in the summer time... and we also leave open, so many acres of grass on the
326 summer time, for the winter time, for the cows.

327

328 **Bill:** So they’re not grazing... where the cows are in the winter time, they’re not
329 grazing...nobody is... none of them are grazing in the summer time.

330

331 **Frank:** That is correct. That way, you keep everything in good shape. The grass is
332 beautiful... grows up again... no weedies, none like this; no weeds grown up anymore.

333

334 **Bill:** Don’t want those weeds.

335

336 **Frank:** Ohhhhh, man. In some places, it is all weeds now.

337

338 **Bill:** It has gotten really bad, hasn’t it.

339

340 **Frank:** Some people got different programs than others.

341

342 **Bill:** Did you do burning?

343

344 **Frank:** Oh, yes. Yes, sir. We usually do like in April, a couple weeks before we turn
345 cattle to grass. Actually, my theory was, we leave enough grass, from last year, to burn...

346

347 **Bill:** So that it does burn...

348

349 **Frank:** So the weeds start growing, get them like 4 or 5 inches tall, between the dead
350 grass. When you burn your grass, you get rid of the weeds.

351

352 **Bill:** It burns the weeds too.

353

354 **Frank:** Burns the weeds. Nice looking grass come up!

355

356 **Bill:** Good! I haven’t had anyone say it quite like that, so I appreciate it! That’s one of
357 those little details we’re trying to get at.

358

359 **Frank:** It is part of the program.

360

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361 **Bill:** For people who don't understand all of the principles of burning, it is such an
362 important part of the Flint Hills.

363

364 **Frank:** That's right! I also used to do this care program, like in summer time, well, of
365 course, we have plenty of grass. In the summer time we rotate the pastures, we spray 'em.
366 Not only burn 'em, but we also spray 'em, you know, the sumac, and all that.

367

368 **Bill:** You also spray.

369

370 **Frank:** So it was beautiful grass.

371

372 **Bill:** To get rid of the sumac.

373

374 **Frank:** We had a real good spraying program, control program.

375

376 **Bill:** Herbicide.

377

378 **Frank:** It's a nice ranch. I see around, you know, some other people, they do nice job
379 too, you know.

380

381 **Bill:** It's what makes the Flint Hills what they are, the constant maintenance, it doesn't
382 just happen.

383

384 **Frank:** Yes, sir!

385

386 **Track 48**

387

388 **Frank:** That's right! I've been learning from all these people, too, because I have some
389 nice people working at the ranch, over there.

390

391 **Bill:** How many people actually work the ranch, say the 10,000 acres?

392

393 **Frank:** When I was there, since we worked mostly on construction; construction pens,
394 and buildings. See what Clair done is, Clair say, Frank here is my check book and here is
395 a brand new pickup. Go to the ranch and make something out of it. So I start building the
396 feed lot shed, the buildings – it's a nice set up. I had the money. And I said OK. So, it
397 was nice, to do it for him. We built so many things, a big old silo, pens. And, of course,
398 there is the environment. OK? We got to a 2000 head capacity feed lot, well, then you
399 have to deal with your environment.

400

401 **Bill:** All the environmental issues...

402

403 **Frank:** We had to deal with the EPA, KD&A and everybody. We had to build lagoons.
404 So we had quite a few people working for us. Like... I always had two cowboys working
405 for us, but it was never enough... I had to help them... cowboying. I had my feed man,

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406 my maintenance man, it was like six people working at the ranch. Not counting the
407 construction, because Mr. Hutchison was taking care of that.

408
409 **Bill:** Sure, when you needed actual construction done, you'd bring in a crew to do that.

410
411 **Frank:** He had his own company and everything, to do that. But, on the ranch, we were
412 all the time about six people. You know, you had to grind all kinds of feed, receive trucks
413 of hay, and we have farm land, too. We planted corn...

414 **Bill:** That's an interesting aspect of the Flint Hills that I hadn't understood. Somebody
415 told me that virtually every ranch does have farm land, too... in the lower areas.

416
417 **Frank:** ... in the lower areas. Had to have farm land...

418
419 **Bill:** We think of the limestone and the Flint Hills, but... a lot of farm land. Did you do
420 your own farming, then?

421
422 **Frank:** We did our own farm. We only had about 300 acres... and we put everything in
423 corn. And to rotate the crops, we put alfalfa for a couple of years, and then come back to
424 corn.

425
426 **Bill:** Come back to corn...

427
428 **Frank:** ... because of the silage. We also bought a lot of corn from the neighbors, all the
429 neighbors... for the feeding of the cattle. Yes, sir.

430
431 **Bill:** You have had a broader mix of activities on your farm... particularly after you got
432 the feed lot going.

433
434 **Frank:** Ranching, feedlot, farming...

435
436 **Bill:** How long did the... you take the yearlings off the grass in July, perhaps? How long
437 are they in the feedlot?

438
439 **Frank:** They should be like 120 days more...

440
441 **Bill:** Another 120 days...

442
443 **Frank:** I try to gain 3 pounds, 4 pounds per head per day... so, you had to get them to 12
444 hundred, 14 hundred pounds to get to the final feeding... and ship them out to IBP or
445 where ever.

446
447 **Bill:** That is a lot of feed!

448
449 **Frank:** ... a lot ... its all corn!

450

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451 **Bill:** And, it's all corn!

452

453 **Frank:** You had to start them with hay...right at the beginning, talkin' about two
454 weeks...

455

456 **Bill:** ... a transition period?

457

458 **Frank:** ... a transition...

459

460 **Bill:** Off the grass, you feed them hay. Then you can put them on corn.

461

462 **Frank:** Yes. Some hay and some other stuff, then a little bit of corn.

463

464 **Bill:** Is there supplements in that, too?

465

466 **Frank:** Oh, yes. Proteins, minerals and everything else. In two or three weeks, we have
467 them to full feed – which is 80% corn, along with proteins and minerals. It's a really
468 good program.

469

470 **Bill:** Sounds like it!

471

472 **Frank:** Yes sir. And after that, you know, in 1999, we was having a real good time. And
473 Mr. Hutchison bought 3000 head of calves from Florida. All the years, that was the most
474 money we ever made. Fifty cents a pound, in Florida. I never heard anything else like it.
475 The cheapest we bought, that one year.

476

477 **Bill:** You were able to get the calves very cheap...

478

479 **Frank:** Fifty four cents a pound! I remember that exactly!

480

481 **Bill:** That really tells the story... brought 'em in, and put 'em on the grass...

482

483 **Frank:** We took them to a wheat fields in Oklahoma... we rented some wheat fields in
484 Oklahoma, to get

485

486 **Track 49**

487

488 **Frank:** the cheapest gain we can get out of them, cheap cattle. We took them to the
489 wheat fields in Oklahoma, through the winter, and then we ship them out...

490

491 **Bill:** Because you got them in the fall.

492

493 **Frank:** Right. Put them in the winter in the Oklahoma wheat field... got them all the way
494 to March... and brought them home... process them... we give them shots, and all that
495 stuff. ... process them in April, May, turn them out to grass... which is cheaper gain! We

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496 got them all the way to three-quarters season. OK? We got them in September. Ship them
497 out the grass, and put them on the feed lot. ...and, now, the corn was cheap, at that
498 time...

499
500 **Bill:** Still, before ethanol...

501
502 **Frank:** Really, before ethanol... and, he make so much money out the them... the cattle.
503 Because we use to lose \$80 a head, or something like that, before, in the program. But,
504 that time, he made a bunch of money. It was a good deal.

505
506 **Bill:** Cyclical business! Very interesting.

507
508 **Frank:** Very interesting, yes. Good business.

509
510 **Bill:** You mentioned the inoculations... the medicines the calves get... that's on a regular
511 cycle?

512
513 **Frank:** That's when you switch, say, from six months...apart... a calf, when they are
514 born, we let them grow up, for a couple of months... and we give them the shots, like,
515 IBR, the black leg, just a couple of shots. And then, when we wean them, from the cows,
516 like one hundred pound calves, then we give them the rest of the shots. The IBR, again,
517 the black let, the....,, the program. And they really did good. We always have real
518 good gains.

519
520 **Bill:** They gain a lot better when they've had all their shots.

521
522 **Frank:** Oh, yes. That's for sure.

523
524 **Bill:** They're feeling good,... having a good life.

525
526 **Frank:** Pretty good, I'm talking about our native calves, the ones born at home. The ones
527 we bought at sale barns, we went through a lot of drugs. But, we never went over 1%
528 dead loss.

529
530 **Bill:** That's very good.

531
532 **Frank:** The people we had... all the program that we had... We never went over 1 %
533 loss. I was happy with that, I was really impressed. Because, the banks, they say you
534 don't want to go over 2 %.

535
536 **Bill:** They're saying two percent, and you stay under one, well... That's good!

537
538 **Frank:** Yes sir.

539
540 **Bill:** You mention relationship with the bank. That's an important partner?

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541

542 **Frank:** That's an important part. Yes, it's real important. Because, if it wasn't for the
543 bank, we wouldn't have any business.

544

545 **Bill:** You have to finance your operations...during the year...

546

547 **Frank:** Yes, feed, all the feed for the cattle. All the medicine. Everything. It's very
548 important.

549

550 **Bill:** Then, hopefully be able to pay them back at the end of the year.

551

552 **Frank:** That's correct! That's the hope, you know. Make a little bit for the people, make
553 a little bit for expenses, and they also pay the bank. So, that's very important. In 1999,
554 when Mr. Hutchinson sold the ranch... he was kind of... I kind of miss it for a while.
555 Because there were so many years of involvement... I can say it, I built the ranch.
556 Because, it was all grass. Just one mobile home, sitting in there.

557

558 **Bill:** In the whole ten thousand acres?

559

560 **Frank:** Right now there is a big house, buildings, grain bins, elevators, I mean, it was all
561 built there while I was there.

562

563 **Bill:** It was all built up. Where is it actually located? You said two and half miles south?

564

565 **Frank:** Twelve and a half miles.

566

567 **Bill:** Twelve and a half miles south.

568

569 **Frank:** You go over south of Council Grove... on the Dunlap road... until you run out of
570 blacktop... you run into a T...turn right, one mile. One mile west, is where the ranch is. It
571 is just one mile east of Buffalo lake.

572

573 **Bill:** OK.

574

575 **Frank:** Yes sir

576

577 **Bill:** And that was a good ranch.

578

579 **Frank:** It was nice! Beautiful!

580

581 **Bill:** So then you, what did you do then?

582

583 **Frank:** In '99, he sold the ranch, we moved to town, with my family, and bought the
584 local restaurant: The Saddle Rock Café.

585

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586 **Bill:** And you've had that since then.

587

588 **Track 50**

589

590 **Frank:** Until last June 1st, two months ago, we sold the restaurant.

591

592 **Bill:** You sold the restaurant. Now you are back in construction.

593

594 **Frank:** I'm back in construction.

595

596 **Bill:** Holding Tuttle Creek Dam together.

597

598 **Frank:** That's right... That's one thing about cattle... back to cattle, ok?

599

600 **Bill:** Let's stay with cattle.

601

602 **Frank:** When I was at the restaurant... I had plenty of employees, and my wife was
603 there, and everybody... I went to work for a different company... for a mineral company.
604 All West Feed Company...was the name of the company.

605

606 **Bill:** All West?

607

608 **Frank:** All West Feed Company... I learned so many things there, too. Because it was
609 part of the Flint Hills programs... mineral for cattle.

610

611 **Bill:** Minerals for the cattle?

612

613 **Frank:** For the cattle. Since I was in the cattle business, I had never heard of this
614 programs... we always used regular mineral, its all mixed...and these labels, and proteins
615 and everything else. But this company, they have what they call the individual minerals,
616 and they have the feeders with twelve departments and they had the vitamins, the
617 minerals, the potassium, the magnesium, everything separated, ok?

618

619 **Bill:** Ok....

620

621 **Frank:** And you put it on... you put the feeders on the pastures...and the cattle... I
622 couldn't believe this, but I see it... the cattle eat what they need.

623

624 **Bill:** They take the individual...

625

626 **Frank:** They took whatever they needed. If they didn't need it, they didn't eat it.

627

628 **Bill:** You didn't have to put it all together... They would actually go down the feeder,
629 and eat whichever they needed.

630

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631 **Frank:** And through the months, say a four month period... The first month, say, you
632 have 600 head of cattle on this pasture – we have five mineral feeders. In the first month,
633 we put the same thing in the mineral feeders. Now, they eat too much of this box, too
634 much...

635
636 **Bill:** You put the same amount in each feeder?

637
638 **Frank:** ...of magnesium, say, yes. The same thing... It is amazing, how the cattle, in that
639 time of year... they kind of eat the same stuff. The next month, they eat something else,
640 the vitamin A.

641
642 **Bill:** They eat a different amount...

643
644 **Frank:** Vitamin A, next month...

645
646 **Bill:** You keep track of that?

647
648 **Frank:** Oh, yes! All the boxes would be missing the vitamin A... the most. So, the cattle
649 eats the mineral, according to is needed.

650
651 **Bill:** How do they know that??

652
653 **Frank:** Oh, yes! I was impressed. Oh, yes... We also have another pasture, with 200
654 head of cows – we put mixed mineral, AND a box with individual... they go to eat on the
655 individual, more than the mixed mineral...

656
657 **Bill:** They'd rather eat the minerals, individually!

658
659 **Frank:** They eat the benenite, the magnesium, or whatever they need...out of the box...
660 rather than eat the mixed mineral. It is interesting. Yes sir.

661
662 **Bill:** Very interesting. That's a new contribution. I'd not heard that. Is that a fairly new
663 development?

664
665 **Frank:** No, it's been known for years and years and years. But it is kind of in the north...
666 of the United States, the Dakotas, North and South Dakota. That's where it came from.

667
668 **Bill:** That's where it was developed? And there are just getting it down here, recently.

669
670 **Frank:** This company is from South Dakota... and they have places in Kansas. They
671 have a warehouse in Herrington, Kansas, that's where I was working. They have one in
672 Alta Vista... and they have all kinds of minerals.

673
674 **Bill:** They are continuing to spread out... and different ranches are beginning to pick it
675 up?

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676

677 **Frank:** Right! I worked for them for two and a half years, while I had the restaurant. I
678 went to Oklahoma, Missouri, Nebraska, Arkansas, South Dakota... making deliveries.
679 Even on Western Kansas, the feed lots. The Dairies use it a LOT!

680

681 **Bill:** They found it works for them, too.

682

683 **Frank:** That's where we sold the most... on the Dairies. The cows, we set the mineral
684 feeders inside the pen, where they eat their feed, everyday... it is amazing how much
685 they eat! Different minerals, every week, it be different!

686

687 **Bill:** You were delivering feeders, occasionally, as well as minerals?

688

689 **Frank:** Feeders, minerals, we also had molasses.

690

691 **Track 51**

692

693 **Frank:** ... , liquid feeds, and stuff... they've been selling that for years and years, this
694 company.

695

696 **Bill:** How do they provide the liquid?

697

698 **Frank:** They had liquid feeders with rollers...

699

700 **Bill:** Kind of like a waterer?

701

702 **Frank:** Yes, like waterers... They have these tanks, lots a feeders, on wheels, the cows
703 like the wheels... and they control the consumption...the have so much stuff they put on
704 the molasses... to control the consumption...

705

706 **Bill:** Molasses??

707

708 **Frank:** Molasses, liquid molasses, and they put all the way from alcohol, tylosol, milk
709 way, proteins, minerals, on the molasses, to get the twenty percent level...

710

711 **Bill:** To get the right mix...

712

713 **Frank:** Right. We sold so much molasses around here... a lot!

714

715 **Bill:** Amazing!

716

717 **Frank:** It is amazing, because... in the fall... when you have a pasture that you never
718 graze... if you put your cows in there, your cows and calves in there, you put your tanks
719 of molasses with twenty percent protein... they go eat, like a pound a day...they will go

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720 eat the grass to fill up... They go eat the molasses, they go eat the grass... they stay in
721 perfect condition. It is really interesting.

722

723 **Bill:** That is good for the cows.

724

725 **Frank:** It works real good. So I've been learning all this, through the Flint Hills.

726

727 **Bill:** This is all going on out here in the Flint Hills! I really appreciate that... because
728 I've been wanting to get each person I talk to get a little bit more in depth in some
729 things... It's easy to just talk about "you drive the cattle here... and you put them on the
730 truck, " and... But I know there is a lot more going on behind the scenes.

731

732 **Frank:** Yes. You know, like you say, shipping cattle, doctoring cattle, feeding cattle. We
733 may all have the same programs, we all do the same.

734

735 **Bill:** Yes, all the same, but, individually, there are a lot of difference, and a lot of choices
736 to make. Both for the health of the cattle, ... for the environment, ...and for profitability.

737

738 **Frank:** That's correct.

739

740 **Bill:** Each one has to be balanced.

741

742 **Frank:** The only thing I worry about the Flint Hills is the... since they came here, to
743 now... I've seen so much grass over-grazed.

744

745 **Bill:** Over-grazing is still a problem?

746

747 **Frank:** Oh! ... it is through the years.

748

749 **Bill:** When I was in Tucson, they had so many that were over-grazed so much, there was
750 hardly any grass left, and so it is something I have watched. It does seem like a lot of it
751 gets eaten down very short.

752

753 **Frank:** In the pastures, there was the beautiful grass... ten years ago, or so... you go
754 back now... it is all yellow flowers, everywhere... And its not controlled by spraying,
755 like herbicide, or anything else. Or controlled through grazing, or something. There is a
756 little concern about it. It is a problem.

757

758 **Bill:** And the red cedar trees.

759

760 **Frank:** And the red cedar trees.

761

762 **Bill:** You always kept them under control?

763

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764 **Frank:** On Clair's ranch, we kept our pastures clean. Whatever... we had a few with
765 trees... hash trees and brush... we cleaned them up!

766
767 **Bill:** Cleaned them up!

768
769 **Frank:** Cleaned them up.

770
771 **Bill:** Keep the cleaned up, so you can have good productive grass.

772
773 **Frank:** Yes. If you happen to go to Kahola Lake, go through the Hinchman ranch, go to
774 Kahola Lake, to Emporia... just follow the road, Kahola Lake road... right on top the
775 dam at the lake... going south... when you go by the lake, on both sides of the road, for
776 like three miles... it was part of the ranch. And you see the grass, and everything.

777
778 **Bill:** I'll try to do that on the way back.

779
780 **Frank:** Anyway, that is part of the deal.

781 **Bill:** Appreciate it. Anything else we should talk about? I'm not going to look at my
782 questions. You've told me so many things I would not have asked...

783
784 **Frank:** Maybe I didn't give you a chance to ask any questions....

785
786 **Bill:** I didn't want to... Today, I felt like I was talking to a real ranch man! I wanted to
787 get what you thought was important!

788
789 **Frank:** Going back to where I started, OK? I'll go back to visit Mexico... and visit
790 Mexico... it is so sad, because we had five years without rain, over there. And the big
791 ranches

792
793 **Track 52**

794
795 **Frank:** the big haciendas that used to be over there... they had to sell their cattle... the
796 had to sell their land... because there was...

797
798 **Bill:** ...nothing left.

799
800 **Frank:** No. It is still dry. Don't get me wrong, this year has been the best, and
801 everything... it looks green. The economic is terrible, and such.

802
803 **Bill:** What's become of the ranches? Do there sit there idle, or has somebody else taken
804 them over and keep trying?

805
806 **Frank:** Well, some of them, the original ranchers... there families are still trying... some
807 of them work real hard... sell cattle enough to survive... they don't have many, like

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808 before. The land is poor. It takes more acres per cow, now... then before... and, actually,
809 right now... the economic problem over there is part of the problem.

810

811 **Bill:** The overall economy...

812

813 **Frank:** Ya...the weather, the environment, the economic problem... and all that stuff.

814

815 **Bill:** Makes you glad to be in the Flint Hills?

816

817 **Frank:** Oh! One hundred percent! Yes sir! Yes, I been around... I see things around...
818 the way it is in Mexico... no way, I been here for so many years... I could go back to
819 Mexico, and make it. When I... if I have the opportunity to own something here, like a
820 ranch, or something. I prefer the Flint Hills, one hundred percent, better than anywhere
821 else, even New Mexico or Texas. Ya!

822

823 **Bill:** Ya! I've sure come to appreciate that... from the ranchers I've had a chance to talk
824 to.

825

826 **Frank:** They've got it made here, ok? It's nice.

827

828 **Bill:** I guess that's why some of them don't want visitors to be coming. They don't want
829 it be known how nice it is here.

830

831 **Frank:** The only thing they have to do is take care of it... and it be nice, nice.

832

833 **Bill:** I've been very pleased to see how conscious all of the ranchers I've talked to are of
834 maintaining the land and the grass as it is, as they were given it, as they'll pass it on.

835

836 **Frank:** Right. I'm real happy, to have all these people around, the ranchers, how they
837 treat the grass! This highway, 177 south, I don't think you're going to see better grass!

838

839 **Bill:** Yes, its great! I drove it yesterday. [Pause] Well, I think we've come about to the
840 end.

841

842 **Frank:** Pretty much.

843

844 **Bill:** Thank you, Frank, for the great conversation.

845

846 **Frank:** Thank you, for giving me the opportunity.

847

848

849

850

851