

**CONNECTICUT 20TH CENTURY AGRICULTURAL HISTORY PROJECT
ORAL HISTORIES**

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LL: ...with Stew Johnson. It's June 1st, 1999 and it's for the Agriculture 20th Century History Project. Stew, you were a faculty member here for many years and I know of your background, but as I put together the history of [Unintelligible] agriculture, it's seemed important to talk retirees of the college also. So, could you start with where did you attend college?

SJ: I graduated from the University of Wisconsin in 1935 and then I was on the faculty of three different universities – the University of Wisconsin, Cornell, and Vermont for nine years. At the age 30, I came to the University of Connecticut as associate professor, became professor in 1950, and retired in 1973. My time was divided 1/3 each in research, resident teaching, and extension. My main fields were marketing and specifically dairy marketing, and to a second degree, finance.

LL: What were your majors in college?

SJ: In college, my major was in agriculture economics. I started at the University of Wisconsin in chemistry and I took mini courses in chemistry. After two years, I shifted to agriculture economics.

LL: Then your masters and your doctorate were in...?

SJ: Agriculture economics.

LL: Did you specialize in dairy right away?

SJ: I specialized in dairy milk process. This takes my whole career from growing up on a dairy farm in Wisconsin to a university there, and I'm doing some research in a professional way when I was 20 years old in 1934 at the University of Wisconsin. Then, my masters and PhD degrees were both in milk

marketing and masters at Vermont, and I received the PhD in dairy marketing in 1941 when I was 26 years old. So, I finished without necessary paper early.

LL: You said that this was the actual anniversary date of you coming to Connecticut.

SJ: Actually, I drove her around Memorial Day from Cornell and then the first day of – on a Saturday in Connecticut, it was June 1st, 1945.

LL: You said your first interaction with agriculture then was from your family and your family had a dairy farm?

SJ: Yes.

LL: What kind of dairy do you remember back from when – how many cows did you have?

SJ: We had about 25 cows and they were [Unintelligible] cows. They were large cows. In addition to that, I picked string beans for the canning factory and we had sweet corn for canning factory but essentially, it was 80% or 90% of the income from the cow's milk and the animals.

LL: How was milk processed back then? I mean, you had a cooler? You had...?

SJ: No, we didn't have a cooler other than running water. So, we took the milk each day to a cooperative cheese factory which was a half mile from the farm. I would take the milk there with a horse or a team pulling the wagon that had the milk cans and we would dump it there, and then get the whey which was a byproduct from making cheese. We take the whey back to the farm in the same cans to give that to the pigs.

LL: Twenty-five heads, was that considered a large herd?

SJ: It was considered a large farm at that time, 25 milking cows.

LL: How many pounds of milk per day?

SJ: I can't remember, but it was about three or four cans a day and we used larger cans for the curd cans.

LL: Larger cans, okay. Were there other members of your family? Do you have brothers and sisters?

SJ: I had one brother and three sisters.

LL: Had your family had the farm for a while?

SJ: My father bought it when he worked in the woods in the logging camps before he was of age. So, my grandfather had to sign for him as guardian. The farmland was just 120 acres of woods, and my father could make more money in the woods by cutting the trees on the farm. So, he hired every people to cut the woods, cut the trees and pay them. In addition, they got the wood.

LL: That's what cleared it to later being pasture land?

SJ: It was really for corn, hay, and grain – either oats or barley.

LL: So, how did you begin your career and your education? How did you decide you wanted to go into agriculture as a profession and then into education?

SJ: As a senior, I intended not to go to college in the first year. However, I've been in the Future Farmer Organization and there was a man who was famous at the university. He died in August of 1931, Stephen Babcock who invented the Babcock milk test which was used the next 50 years, and people at the university decided – there was a person elsewhere Stephen Babcock lived only one mile [Unintelligible] from the main university, and they made it into a cooperative house for our ag students, and 24 of us arrived there. So the first time I heard about going there was when my boy teacher took the buck about a mile out to the bean trailer where I was picking snap beans for canning factory. He had already offered the one spot to somebody else who decided he wouldn't take it, and so it was offered to me. So, I headed for Madison without even a certificate or anything showing that I had a high school degree. They just took everybody then and sent out a quarter of them the first year when they failed chemistry or something else.

LL: So then as you went out to – did you work while you were in college?

SJ: I worked my way through. I didn't get a dime from home and the agreement was that he wouldn't – this was the depression of 1931 to '35. So, my mother did the laundry and then we had a laundry box that we sent in the mail. Aside from that, he didn't give me 50 cents because it would be a matter of honor that I was on my own and I wouldn't be on my own if he offered any money any time. So, I earned my way through the four-years completely.

LL: What did your parents think about you going to school though?

SJ: They both approved. My mother had gone to college and had been an English teacher before she was married. My father never went to high school because there wasn't any high school where he lived, where he grew up. They didn't form the high school until 1903 and he was born in 1879, so there was no high school for anybody to go to in the area where he lived.

LL: Even if he had to travel into town? Is that...?

SJ: Well, there wasn't any high school in town in those days. He would have to go to Green Bay, 35 miles away.

LL: Did they board there then or did they...?

SJ: When the high school started in 1903, the first four students, the first four that graduated, two were my father's sisters and two older sisters of another prominent family in town, but there were just four graduates from the class of 1903?

LL: Are they canoeing every day?

SJ: They canoed. They lived within three miles so [Unintelligible] which was the city. When my brother started high school, he ran out on a horse to high school. He went to the Indian Reservation and he bought an Indian pony. I was younger than my brother and we went dickered with the Indians, bought an Indian pony, and brought it home. That's how he started high school. He had to have a shade at the high school, some hay, and a place to get water, but he went to high school each day, and the pony, the Indian pony.

LL: Then you followed him later on the pony?

SJ: By that time, we had an automobile.

LL: Okay.

SJ: So, my father would let me go and I could drive when I was sophomore. There were no driver's licenses in those days. I would take two or three other people and we would park the car near the high school.

LL: What car was it and what year was that?

SJ: We had [Unintelligible] Ford when we went to the Indian Reservation. Later on, he had a Plymouth and later on, he had a Studebaker. He bought the car not with cash but by trading with a car dealer in town. He could take five of our cows and he could pick them out after we picked out the best ones. He could pick out any five other than bulls, and then they five cows that he took on, he gave us the new car.

LL: What was your home life like with your mother [Unintelligible]? You said she was an English teacher.

SJ: Around the farm, we canned the tomatoes and some other things. We had apples and we made cider in a keg in the basement so that we ate well on the farm.

LL: Did you serve in the war?

SJ: Well, I volunteered once to be in the Naval Reserve Corps and took some courses in radio, and a dozen of us. When the recruiting officer came, he turned me down. He turned down half of us and half he took. Then later, I was drafted and went to Syracuse to the armory from the post office Ithaca, New York and we spent all day going from place to place there. When we got the final review, they finally concluded I can't see well enough and so they gave me ride in a bus to Syracuse and then we walked or hitchhiked home afterwards, but the more I was in the dairy field and it was mostly at Cornell University, an extension, It was 100% an extension.

LL: So was that your first job after graduating?

SJ: My first job was on the faculty of the University of Wisconsin and went ahead four years at the University of Vermont and four years at Cornell before I was 30 and before I came here, but I didn't spend like – I remember D-Day because that early days, I was in Washington D.C., all 30 days, and it was a grim place. We were working on – other than combat, it was on butter for the rations, the rationing of dairy products to location, different [Unintelligible] and different parts of the country. So, I had the 30 days when I didn't see anything but Washington D.C. and it happened to be June of '44 which was 6th. It was D Day.

LL: That was part of your Cornell extension work?

SJ: No. Cornell had – everybody was on nine months' pay and three months off and we're given nine checks a year. In the other three months, you can do anything you wanted but if you painted a house or something like that, it was frowned on. So, there was this chance to go in the Department of Agriculture in this work program for 30 days in June, so I took the train down and got there on the first day of June and stayed there through the 30th and then went back to Cornell.

LL: What were some of the key areas that – what was your dissertation?

SJ: My dissertation really in simple terms was forecasting the milk supply. We used fancier words, “The elasticity of the supply of milk,” but we were trying to forecast from seeing the prices, anything you can think of so that you would know how much milk would be produced in Vermont, in New England, in the country six months from now, and five years from now. In Vermont – I hitchhiked from Wisconsin to Vermont. I’ve never been [Unintelligible] to Chicago.

LL: You went there to work?

SJ: I went to Vermont on getting a master’s degree at \$75.00 a month for 12 months which would be combination work and courses. The first two months, I spent in Cabot, Vermont and you’ve heard of their Cabot cheese, butter and so on. There were about four or five people that were interviewing all of the farmers in two townships who lived in Cabot and Marshfield which was the adjacent town, and they came from all over the country. One from Norway, one from Kentucky, one from Montana, and one from Nebraska. They were Harvard grad students mostly, but the five of us did all the work for this research project and John Dee Black from Harvard who was Kenneth Galbraith’s – Black picked Galbraith as Black’s successor in the job at Harvard, and you probably heard of Kenneth Galbraith.

LL: He’s the efficiency expert, Galbraith.

SJ: He’s an economist and he’s 90 years old now, I think.

LL: So, when you first went to extension work, what was it like then? [Crosstalk] you combined – so then you went from research there and then...

SJ: I was in an extension work at the University of Wisconsin and then at Vermont, I was resident teaching and research. At Cornell, I was in extension, but many of the projects I had were done during authorship of those who were on research and teaching even though my pay was 100% extension at Cornell for four years. The first trip was to Long Island and I met with two people who were in the top dozen or so in the country near the big clock at Grand Central Station and we resolved the nasty problem then and there. They were concerned what happened to dairy farmers in Long Island of which there were between 200 and 300 there. I would go out and visit the county in Nassau County and then Suffolk County in Long Island. We already knew and we had an argument, the three of us, but we could compromise. We had arrived at a solution that the Long Island farmers would be pleased with, but we couldn’t tell them it would take effect tomorrow. We had to go through a hearing and have a determination made in Washington, exceptions, and briefs, but that was my first job in Cornell really was on Long Island in 1941.

LL: So, when you came here – well, what were some of the other projects you did while you were at Cornell?

SJ: I did quite a bit on the hauling of milk because we didn’t know whether there are going to be any more tires or not for the next 10 years or 15 years. So, when the tires wore out, they were bad.

LL: They had refrigerated trucks at that time?

SJ: No, there weren’t. The milk came in cans and by that time, they had refrigeration in the milk houses at home, but they would bring the milk into these plants and the haulers pressed us so we would work out the hauling plan that would conserve these tires, conserve time, and waste fewer miles.

LL: Fuel too was...

SJ: Fuel and gasoline. That really was hard work. You'd have to get there before these trucks came at 5:30 in the morning or so, and find where they came from and what farms they stopped at. Then, we draw up a plan for rearranging where the haulers got the milk.

LL: How many haulers do you think there were at that time in that area?

SJ: Well, in this plant – it was plant by plant and then you have to – and there would be, say, at this hour there might 20 haulers at this particular plant and then it would differ, but according that, we wrote a plan for that. Then, we sold the plan up in Barnes County and everywhere. This wasn't my main work in the four years but this took six months of it.

LL: Who were the haulers? Were they...?

SJ: They were private haulers trying to make a living.

LL: Were some of them farmers?

SJ: Some of them were farmers and...

LL: It was a trucking industry, so to speak.

SJ: It was a trucking industry and maybe it was part-time or they might farm and haul milk too.

LL: Eventually when you came to Connecticut, how did you happen to come here?

SJ: I came here thinking of work and I knew I liked it at Cornell, but I thought of going to Iowa state, Maryland, or Connecticut. Then, I went to Maryland for an interview and I went to Iowa state for an interview, and here. I was offered a job three places and the pay was higher here. It was rank of an associate professor when I arrived rather than instructor assistant. I was only 30 years old and then I liked the department head [Unintelligible]. His strongest point was that he would give support to the members and the staff. You did your own work but in your own way, but as far as any – you needed secretarial help, you needed a new desk, or a big map somewhere, Harry was very good at providing it right away. Actually, he allowed me to – I took leave of absence without pay for five months in 1948, and [Unintelligible] was pleased that I was recognized pretty much around the Northeast and around the country by the time four years went by. It's always a happy place here.

LL: Did you marry?

SJ: Yes.

LL: At what point in your life?

SJ: At Vermont in 1940.

LL: Children?

SJ: I have two children. One born in Cornell and one born in Connecticut.

LL: Had your wife come from an agricultural background?

SJ: No, she had not. Her father had been president and manager of the Packard School of Business in New York City and before that, he had been in kind of the business section in Rochester New York High School.

LL: So, how did you meet?

SJ: We were grad students together at the University of Vermont.

LL: What was her major?

SJ: Her major was education and it was reading readiness of ...

LL: [Crosstalk]

SJ: ...new methods of children in the first grade or kindergarten having difficulty reading. So, she continued in that and I was a provost for almost a year. My youngest child was one of them who were reading really from my wife here.

LL: When you came here, what became your key research areas?

SJ: I was a third in research and third extension, primarily in dairy marketing. Resident teaching, I taught two courses. [Unintelligible] let me name the course that's never been taught here. The content and the course, and I named it Price Analysis for the undergrads. I taught it Monday, Wednesday, or Friday, 8:00 in the morning. So, when I was on extension meetings and got home at midnight from [Unintelligible] County, by then, I could be thinking of what I'll do at 8:00 the next morning in resident teaching, and I had a graduate course in marketing. Well, I spent too much time on that. In addition, the teaching. So, I had two courses only, one graduate and one undergrad, and they were my courses. Then, I was adviser to grad students on the Graduate School Committee. More specifically on the dairy marketing, I could describe some things.

LL: This is the research unit you're in?

SJ: No, this is – I'll have to indicate differently research and extension...

LL: Okay.

SJ: ...because they got mixed together.

LL: Well, that's the model you see. [Laughter] Okay.

SJ: Incidentally, in working with cooperatives, I was in the legislature on policy but I did little things. Like Shady Glen has a restaurant over in Manchester and if you went there a year ago, they had all those napkins for 50th year anniversary of Shady Glen. When John and Bernice formed that 50 years ago which was 1948, Leonard Allen, who was in the dairy department, and I really helped them out and we were there on day one of Shady Glen. They didn't know how to make ice cream. They had a few cows and they had milk at home, raw milk and now they were going to have restaurants. So, Leonard didn't even go for that, but he was making ice cream, and as a result – he did much more than I did, but I was in that, the two of us. As a result of that for about 10 years, any time we stopped at Shady Glen and there's John or Bernice there or the owners were there, they would never make out a check. We never paid a bill and we were so embarrassed on this. When we'd come back as we did frequently, Leonard and I, from different

places in Connecticut, we would say, “We can’t dare to stop at Shady Glen. They’ll recognize us. They won’t let us pay.” They even did that – Leonard and I, this is part of the extension, we had a group from Japan who were here about that time and Shady Glen was there. We took them to the milk dealers throughout in New Haven. Mike was there, I think was in New London. It’s a very nice place. He had a spick and span place. We wanted to show it off, and we went to [Unintelligible]. We went to Stop and Shop or another supermarket, and then we thought we were getting tired coming home because we came and met here in this room that evening with the Japanese and of course, they had interpreters. They couldn’t talk English. We stopped at Shady Glen, and lo and behold, John and Bernice were there. They won’t let them pay anyhow. They paid. The way it was that if you were there with any friends, they don’t pay because they got it started. That was a small thing as far as the milk. Well, the [Unintelligible] a little bit, one was on the school milk program and the other was the pricing of milk to dairy farmers. Now on school milk, there was a program started in 1954 that paid schools. I can think of the name of her. Department of Education was in charge of school lunches and school milk, and she was very good. With about three of my grad students, we had research projects on school milk, so a new program of – I think the government only gave \$100 million. This was 1954 but in out terms, it would be like getting \$500 million in the country. So, we had [Unintelligible]. We persuaded the school to give the milk free in the grade schools and then we got how much milk they drank there, how much milk did they drink when they had to pay five cents, and so on. Some of our students would get master’s thesis out of this. I knew quite a bit about school milk because I met Mayor La Guardia of New York and Mayor Le Guardia liked milk. He knew milk pricing forwards and backwards. He had a Penny Program in New York City in the late ‘30s where in the schools, it only cost a penny for a half pint of milk, and that was La Guardia’s nutrition program in New York City. I knew about that in some – and it worked on them. Then, I was in Great Britain in 1952 for six months and I was able to – I knew they had free milk in schools in England in World War II because of nutrition and Churchill wanted children to have enough to eat. Lo and behold, I knew the people. It was one person in the American Embassy at Grosvenor Square in London who got me passes to the cafeteria and to the big dining hall there, and also to the House of Commons. Churchill had been reelected. He had been defeated right after the war and he was reelected either in late ‘51 or ‘52, and this was the first budget argument. I got the word through some of my friends there. They were going to bring up the subject of school milk whether to continue it in 1952. So, I was in there and Winston Churchill was there and some of the others, Hugh Gaitskell and [Unintelligible]. It was in the small House of Commons because they had rebuilt it. It had been destroyed in the war, and Churchill had insisted they didn’t have enough seats for all the members of Parliament, so some of them would have to stand up. As visitors, there could only be [Unintelligible]. So I guess accidentally, I was in the House of Commons when they brought up that. Churchill was going to discontinue a lot of subsidies, and will he discontinue free school milk? The reply was like, “No way. As long as we are in power as Prime Minister, there will be free milk in England.” So, I had these primary reasons I was interested in school milk. I knew about La Guardia’s program. I knew about Great Britain’s program. I knew about the program here. So, I was invited to be a member. I was the only witness in Washington to a hearing of the House Ag Committee in April of 1955, and I was there. I’ve come to the real reason, but I used the occasion to talk about what I knew about school milk. I was there in the center and there were about 30 congressmen around. I said with, “There are some things that are wrong with this program,” and I was very specific. One thing was they then required them to reduce the price of milk here. For a place like West Hartford, they charged 15 cents or something. They just took the school money and put it on a football team or somewhere else. I said that, “You have to require that the money be used to reduce the price of milk from where it was before. The program doesn’t do that now and it’s wrong. You use basis so that schools who’s been doing a good job will no longer be paid, except for the amount of milk that is consumed there that is larger than the base before the program started.” I said the base program should be zero. It should be discontinued. Then, there was an argument on a few other things on whether it should be chocolate milk or just whole milk. There were some of the congressmen, particularly Jennings from Virginia who got all excited about this. This was my main reason for being there and he said, “We’re going to have that changed.” So, I was there in April ‘55 and they got it changed by September of ‘55 through Congress. Now, the other reason I

was there and I was the only witness that day for about two and a half hours. It was because I had developed a pricing plan. I was on a committee and took leave of absence from here for January, February, and March of '48, July and August. We're 10 college people on this committee. Three came from Cornell, two from Penn State, one from Columbia, one really the best economist in NYU, the best NYU economist. There was one from [Unintelligible], one University of Vermont and me. I was one of the 10 members and I just agreed to be executive secretary so that's why I took leave without pay because as leave without pay, they were paying me two or three times as much as I was getting here in the University of Connecticut. So, we developed this method of pricing. We reprinted them November of '97, and we had our big our big party, coming out party in Syracuse in February of '49 and I ate breakfast with the U.S. Department of Agriculture secretary and came in with maybe 700 people. They came from here, from Connecticut. Don Edinburg went out to Syracuse and Kim Gayer [Unintelligible] from that Farmington area [Crosstalk].

LL: He used to be a big farmer out there at Southwest.

SJ: Yes, I was at that farm a number of times. He was president and we went to 50 meetings together where Ed [Unintelligible] was there. So going back on this, I had done this work on pricing and really, we had a 250-page report. We had hearings all over the place where the judge - where you had to swear to tell the truth, starting way out toward Erie, Pennsylvania and Coney Island, Syracuse, New York City, Watertown, or Rutland before they agreed on the proposal which really was exactly the way I put together, so this is success story. I worked in price milk for more about 15 years after it went in effect from 1950 to 1965. It really set the price for farmers in Connecticut and in Pennsylvania for the 13 years or so, [Unintelligible]. The Midwestern farmers - of course, I came from Wisconsin originally - didn't like this because they said, "You got this method of pricing out in the Northeast and we don't have it in Iowa, Illinois, and Wisconsin. We don't want to destroy it for you or get it for us," and of course, it was easier to say, "Why don't we just try it for these?" So that was the reason I was invited as a sole witness of the Ag Committee in April '55. It was that they didn't have to do about the milk price, seeing difference of opinions from Minnesota and the New York State. So, I gave a prepared statement of about 15 pages, not long, and then spent the next two hours just questions from the members of the committee, and one end of the discussion was - or brought it to an end was that there was a man from Minnesota who wanted to destroy what I and all my good friends helped put together. His name was August Andresen, and he'd been in Congress for 30 years. He would be asking me these mean questions, part about now calling - they're trying to find some dirt, so you could destroy the Eastern method of pricing, and it was getting late there. We've gone more than two hours and I had met with Melvin Laird who was on the committee earlier. So later, he was Secretary of Defense at [Unintelligible] but he was a Congressman from Marshfield, Wisconsin. Before the hearing started, I visited with Melvin Laird because he knew the same people in Wisconsin, a few, and we got along fine. He liked to chat, and so Melvin Laird was sitting in Wisconsin, he was sitting beside August Andresen from Minnesota. So, in a staged whisper, Melvin Laird says to August Andresen, "August, you can't catch him. He's a badger. You have to know Wisconsin is the badger state," or he doesn't - they don't appreciate it.

LL: [Unintelligible]

SJ: August said, "What did you say, hmm?" and Melvin Laird said, "You can't catch him on those questions. He's a badger," and then August caught on, "You mean he knows something about Wisconsin?" Melvin Laird said, "He grew up there. He graduated from the University of Wisconsin." So August Andresen said, "No more questions." So that ended, and nothing happened. The East wasn't destroyed, but there was strong feeling that our method was good and I showed people in Washington they're with the East because Washington had finally just signed the final decree when you have that for us because the argument would be, "Why don't we get busy out there and have college committee from people out there and device a good method?" They took the method. They should destroy the Eastern...

LL: What was your method?

SJ: My method really was fairly simple in the end. Instead of having a formula setting the class on price which is the fluid milk, to set it according to the wholesale price index in part and the wholesale price index in the country, they now call it the – they got another name for it, but it's you get the consumer price index and then you get the wholesale commodity price. Those are the two big ones, but they renamed it after that. Now, I used that as a mover in the formula each month. We change the price each month. According the index, that was just became available, and then I put in two other things. I put in a supply-demand adjusters so that the figure for this big area – 400,000 farmers and the volumes of consumers – how much milk were they drinking relative to how much was being produced. If they were producing more and consumption stay the same, the price of milk would come down, and if less milk was produced, price of milk could go up. Some of them if consumption went up, then you have to correct it for seasonal factors, and then we put in a snubber and those words, I originated that Kenneth Galbraith has that – he originated the word “conventional wisdom.” You can see it in his book. He said he almost took those two words out. He said people will remember me now when they use the word conventional wisdom. I originated that.” Well, in the milk pricing, I originated – or originated is too strong word – the word “movers” and “snubbers.” The snubbers were no matter what happened to the wholesale price index and the supply-demand adjuster. With the movers, you couldn't get further away from the manufacturing value of milk and cheese or it would snub you down and so that really was the one that I developed and actually, after the hearings were all over a year and a half, I have a phone call. “Can you come down to New York City tomorrow? Because the final draftsman is working on it in Washington and he wants to use your method. Could you come down and help me with drafting the final draft?” Which I did at an office in 42nd Street in New York City.

Now I invest in a lot of them but I had given – I had started out with [skim] milk and I should go to a many other things; skim milk. We had a research project and we were the first to have it over here at the Dairy Bar. A lot of people got their milk there. That's where they got their [Unintelligible] milk. Not now but then and it was just milk or maybe chocolate milk and milk. No skim milk.

We devised – George Kroeninger and I who was here on the staff. He controlled the experiment using the Latin Square or some fancy name and where we changed the price of skim milk there relative to whole milk by either two cents a quart, four cents a quart, six cents a quart or eight. This was an experiment to run I think two years or three because we had to have each price difference followed by another price. Then we worked on this possibility of skim milk is seeing now they have 2% milk and 1% involved so it's – apparently, that's good milk. So, we had this control of the experiment and we had a lot of fun and we had two or three grad students here and got their master's thesis on different facts of selling fluid product that was other than whole milk. One of the people that bought the milk there was [Al Wah] who was provost and we didn't tell people we were doing this experiment. We thought it was better to keep it secret and Neil [Anderson] said, “Purpose of the Dairy Bar is research as well as people getting ice cream cones,” and he was on the chamber.

Al Wah heard about it after we'd been in it for six months or a year and he wrote us a very stern letter saying he had since learned that he had been a guinea pig in an experiment. [Audio Gap] – “I'm not purchasing skim milk in the future. I'm going to try to disturb the experiment by buying more of it when the price difference is high than when it is low and that I'm just letting you know my feelings on this matter and you need give me no reply at the end of the letter.” And [Paul Groeninger] and Paul [Putnam] was heading the night and we said, “He's going to get a reply.” [Laughter] But he sure said, “I'm not going to reply.” We gave him a long reply on that this is supposed to be a research organization and the Dairy Bar was supposed to be used for research and why we thought this was valuable research and we completed it. He replied once more I think. I couldn't say absolutely and I think we replied a second time

to the provost so this was one of probably six events relative to the top administration while having the 54 years I've been here. We put out an experiment station bulletin in the hope –

LL: I think I've seen it. The pricing of milk. In fact there were four or five of them.

SJ: And we'd send that to Chicago and I'm sure we stimulated the chef. They would've come anyway but we stimulated the chef from whole milk over to whole milk ingredients in whole milk in a fluid form. Now little things that didn't take any time at all, I went through an awful lot of hearings. Legislative court hearings even one in the Supreme Court that I might get back to where I was there with the Justices and so on. Here's a little one of no consequence. They couldn't sell gallon jugs of milk in Connecticut. They were illegal and Ribicoff was governor and Joe Gill was Commissioner and the reason it was illegal was that they set terms here in the State defining what containers you could put milk in and how to make legal containers so they really had one quart or really had one pint or one half pint. They didn't think of gallon jugs so they never defined gallon jugs so not being defined, they couldn't use. There was a young woman came from Chicago. The husband had been in insurance or something and he had been moved to Connecticut and she formed it and she got milk and gallon jugs in Chicago. So, she formed a Connecticut Consumer's Association. She was very good. Very bright and [Cumberland] wanted to sell milk first in gallon jugs as to break into the market here but they couldn't. There was a special session in the legislature to deal with the gallon jugs. Just one topic over there so Ribicoff didn't know quite what to do so he had a meeting and the meeting was three people: Joe Gill, Ribicoff, and myself.

LL: Joe Gill was a Commissioner Writer for agriculture?

SJ: Yes, yes.

LL: Yes.

SJ: The three of us went in. I met Joe in his office and we walked over to the Capitol that Abe Ribicoff and he said reporters have been outside already. "We're having a special session and I need to know where we're going and I really ought to know milk marketing in general and [Unintelligible] then turned to me, your friend at university, "I need you to just give me a lesson like I'm a student and from the beginning. What's Class I milk? What's Class II milk? How come they have gallon jugs in Chicago and they can't have them here?" I spent maybe two hours just the three of us and when we got through, [Greg McCall] said - he went to me. He said, "You aren't looking for publicity, are you?" I said, "Not at all." He said, "Well there's a way out of here. There are reporters outside. They've been waiting and I haven't had anybody's come in; secretary or anything. We've been here two hours. There is a way out of this Capitol. The back way. The back way, you go through this little door and it's like a fire escape thing. You go through this other – and be careful you don't trip and you can get to grounds eventually. They then finally open the doors and the reporters and then the producers all come in. You won't be on the scene and then they'll never know that you've been here and that worked. I got out of –

LL: What year would that have been?

SJ: I don't know. It was a long time ago but it was in the middle of my years here and I knew Mr. Ribicoff fairly well before anyhow where I knew him afterwards. I don't know the timing because I had many visits in Washington DC In '59 to '60, I had permission one day a week to spend either in Washington or New York City on a financial research thing that I may get to and frequently on the – and they didn't have assigned seats then on the plane. You just went there and you took wherever you want and I would see Ribicoff coming home on a Friday evening there and there and he'd say, "Why don't you sit with me?" I got acquainted with him there and we didn't talk very much but we just had a friendly visit

so he preferred somebody that would be quiet than somebody that would press for this or that. He also wanted to relax so on one time, he would always unbutton his shirt and loosen the tie. He'd put his coat up over at the rack and he'd talk about partly of what he'd done that day and, you know, committee and a hot day and so on. He was tired. Then after we visited a while, he'd say, "Do you mind if I just doze off and would you wake me as we land?" The plane landed at Providence at 7:00 each time coming back from Washington and he said shortly after we leave Providence, right after we leave Providence, "If I go to sleep soundly which I'm going to try to do, will you wake me up?" [Laughter] So I'd wake him up before the plane landed in Hartford. So, I had met him around different occasions and we always got along well together and Ribicoff got along very well with Ken Geyer who was the manager of the Connecticut Milk Producers Association. At the time, Ribicoff had an appointment to make first of the year and I won't name the names on the appointment but Ribicoff didn't want this person appointed, but he was afraid that there would opposition if he didn't appoint him.

On that day, Ken Geyer and it was New Year's Day. Not New Year's Eve but New Year's Day. There were just two people in Ribicoff's house here in Hartford; Ken Geyer and Ribicoff deciding who would have this important high paying job and one – and one – in favor of one person and one – with Ribicoff wanting a second choice to be named.

Ken refused to give a second choice because if I did a second choice, the deal was done because the second choice will be appointed and I'm just going to say you have to stick with the first choice, and so when we left hand on the door from Governor's mansion I guess in Hartford, Ken Geyer said, "Well, we got a nice meeting and I just hope he appoints so-and-so," and Ribicoff said, "Well, don't be too sure of that." That was the party word but he did reappoint the one that Ken Geyer had said should be appointed. There were these – I wasn't there on that but I would hear the story from beginning to end afterwards, but the guy on drugs were – within three months, they were sold in Connecticut and Ribicoff said, "I not only want to know what kind of drugs. I want to know it forwards and backwards." As I say, this was not time consuming on my part or very important. In fact, it was on the unimportant list.

Now on the – the Supreme Court decision was on location differentials. It was a Connecticut case and I was in many court cases. US District Court. Mostly federal. US Court of Appeals. Only one in – where I was there with the Justices present and arguing in the Supreme Court, and I'll mention other hearings but these are the court ones of which there were many and where my first work at Wisconsin in 1934 was reviewing this Supreme Court decisions because they were thinking of making milk a public utility and I reviewed all the court cases that would bare to legality prime time. That was my sole job, was to go to the State of Wisconsin library and the University of Wisconsin main library and review all the court cases that were relative.

And I had learned on many of these court cases that after the '30s, the main point in whether you won or not was does it make common sense? Is it in the public interest? Forget about the legislative history of what – where the people had said this and that when they were debating the milk. Forget about the legislative history. Forget about the exact wording and definition of words and forget about what I had been working on in '34, the legal precedent from other cases.

LL: Yes.

SJ: Work on this doesn't make economic sense here and this and that, and in this location differential case, I wanted that to be the main focus. But there – we had lawyers who were working on this from Shipman & Goodwin and Mr. [Comard] who came from the Comard family who was at Comard High School they have.

LL: Is it C-O-T-T or C-O-M?

SJ: It's C-O-M-A-R-D...

LL: Okay.

SJ: ...Comard.

LL: Okay.

SJ: Yes, so we had three lawyers from Shipman & Goodwin and they liked – particularly, one of them liked the legislative history and the citing of previous cases and somewhere around there, this guy threw the Supreme Court and we lost it. It was called the Cranston case. Cranston was a farmer who was shipping up to Connecticut who lived in the Hudson River Valley over near [Hinsdale] and they had been tossed back and forth US District Court, Court of Appeals and finally got to be heard in the US Supreme Court, and it affects Connecticut farmers.

Ken Geyer was there for it and I'm there when we have this final hearing and we can't talk. Of course, only the lawyers can talk to the Justices at the hearing. They only hear two cases in one day in the Supreme Court from around 9:30 or 10:00 to around 12:30 and you never know which case they'll hear first. They heard first the branch banking case in Florida. Was it legal or illegal to have a bank branch in the supermarket? And it was illegal. Hugo Black, you could tell by the questions asked by the Justices. He said that, "If I went shopping in a supermarket, it would be kind of handy because I run out of money occasionally and I want to pay the bill." You could tell what side he was on, on branch banking.

Well, when it came to ours, the – we had - Thurgood Marshall was on our side. He was on the court but he disqualified himself because he had been in our favor when he was Solicitor General previously so he could not serve on the Supreme Court on our problem. I think it was Burger who later was Chief Justice. He'd been on our side on one of the decisions in the Court of Appeals so he disqualifies himself and there's a vacancy on the court so we only had six Justices and the rule is if there's only five, they never hear the case. They can hear it with six but not with five so the hearing was six.

Well, we win the case with only two of the six. With Hugo Black and Byron White and one of those was William Douglas who was elderly at that time and who exited from the court, went behind the curtains for one reason or other very frequently and never asked a question. The others had questions but that one doesn't come as a victory because we lost it by a vote of 4:2 and so that was one of many –

LL: So when did that one get corrected?

SJ: That one – they were illegal from that time forward. The local differentials were declared illegal.

LL: Now, we have a New England dairy compact now...

SJ: Now that's –

LL: ...but that's nothing to do with location differential...

SJ: Now, on the context of location differential is come in or don't. The situation then when they were considering the compact - I think we met right here. There were some committees from Connecticut who came to see me, Bob [Jack] was on the Board of Directors of Agri-Mark. He came here and Doug Carlson who heads up the [Litchfield] Dairy Committee and maybe six or eight of – from Litchfield County. Litchfield has always been in on the political side more than Fairfield County or New London County. The idea was certainly we'd try to get a compact done and they were asking me, this committee.

LL: Do you mind describe a compact for the tape?

SJ: A compact is where an organization has legal power to enforce the price of milk that is paid to farmers in Class I use. Class I is full of [youth]. They can set the price within certain limits but they can set it higher than what the federal government is setting on a federal order if a federal order still continues.

LL: Now would you describe a federal order?

SJ: A federal order started in the 1930s and I had written – I had been a witness at federal order hearings probably more than any other person living or dead because I went to the 102-day hearing on combining New Jersey and New York. The hearing lasted 102 days and I was a witness there for nine days and I mean nine full days of testimony.

Now on the federal order, they define the marketing area where milk is – where the dealer has consumed the milk and then all farmers who supply milk to it, have their price regulated as minimum prices, not maximum. Not for sure but they can't be any lower. These federal orders came in, in the late 1930s and they were a substitute for retail price fixing.

In 1933, they tried to set retail price fixing and it was declared legal at the [Unintelligible] case which was a 5:4 Supreme Court decision in the middle 1930s or maybe that would be 1933, 1934. So, the federal orders came in and there were maybe 40 of them around the country. Never in California. California was by itself and the state didn't want federal government coming in.

But in Seattle and Chicago and New York and Boston, New Orleans, there were about 40. One for each city and to get the orders, the farmers had to vote for it. If the farmers didn't approve on the – when it was finally proposed and written by the Department of Agriculture in Washington, then you had no order at all. The order was put out of existence and the orders have worked very well except that in the Farm Act three or four years ago, they said, "We're going to revise the whole deal," and now we're in the crux of where instead of having 30 or 40 orders, we'll have 10 or 12, and we'll have one with – we'll combine New England and New York and as one of the 12 in the country.

Then the question comes, "Where would it be priced?" There are still those lingering arguments between Minnesota, Wisconsin, and New York, New England and really the North East, and they took the same view. Let's destroy the East rather than copy. [Unintelligible] had done the work for them and it just seems so logical that they would say, "We'll just – we won't have to work half as hard. We'll take what they've done and we'll do it out here." But no, it's the other argument that has prevailed in my old home state of Wisconsin. The two senators there; Kohl and Feingold. They introduced legislation to make compacts illegal, to make federal orders illegal and so on.

That will be decided by October 1st until it's extended but that's bringing you right up to date, but on the federal orders, I was a witness of – for the Connecticut federal order. See, it came in. It was a state order for 15 years or 20 years with [Don Henryberg] as state administrator but then there was too much interstate milk and the state can't regulate prices under interstate commerce, so he couldn't regulate the price for the farmers that lived by the Hudson River of which there were quite a few shipping milk this way so we got the federal order here for Connecticut first and later for the – it's New England order.

In the end, we introduced some location differentials that have zone differentials because location differentials had been turned and were illegal by the Supreme Court. We got a substitute for them, but not

as good but gave the Connecticut farmers a higher price than they otherwise would get. Had to wrestle a little bit on the federal orders and they don't come back with a compact and in fact they're - and others.

One of the hearings we had was in the year - it was in Memphis, Tennessee. A lot of these hearings, you would have in St. Louis in a suburb called Clayton of St. Louis rather than downtown and then we met in Memphis. This was a national hearing and [Unintelligible] was on one side and Agri-Mark was on another so on.

I was there three months as a witness in Memphis in February I think and in April and May and it was in March, I think when Martin Luther King was killed and he was killed in a hotel which was just two blocks from the hotel where our hearing was held in Memphis, so when taking a walk when you got too tired at these hearings, you'd walk by the place where the fellow made the shot and in the balcony where they would - where King was there.

But to get to what we were working on in Memphis and where I - it was a victory as far as I was concerned. There were two things but the one thing was people wanted to reconstitute milk. To buy skim milk powder that they ordered like [Unintelligible] and so on, and to take these raw products and water and take these products that might come from Minnesota or California or what have you or abroad, another country, and reconstitute it so that the consumers would know that they were drinking the original fluid milk.

The question at this federal order was how should the federal order price this new fluid product? Should they price it so that the cost to the dealer and to the consumer would be the same or will it be substantially less for the reconstituted milk? That's why we had the hearing for - where I was really the chief witness for five days in February, the year that Martin Luther King was killed and in April and May.

I wrote the brief. I gave the testimony and I wrote the brief and the government adopted pretty much our method and [Land O'Lakes], we went back somewhere rather where the Land O'Lakes people were there. The president of Land O'Lakes and the - it was a farmer and the manager of Land O'Lakes and the lawyer and their economist. There was about six there from Land O'Lakes and we thought we had reached a compromise on these small [room] agreements and come to one of our witnesses, the Land O'Lakes lawyer began to question. Give questions and you're under oath and now they're giving the questions but on the stand.

These were very biting questions from the Land O'Lakes lawyer who was an old timer. Who had been there 20 years, 30 years as a Land O'Lakes lawyer. Immediately, we called for a recess and the judge - well, frequently, if you get up and say, "We just have to have a recess," they don't know why to give you a recess.

They get together again and they said, "The [farmers are] present." Well, the board of directors had voted for this compromise of Land O'Lakes and the Land O'Lakes lawyer is doing everything to cut us to ribbons and this can't be. They had phone calls back and forth to Minnesota and finally, they came back. "Yes, we agreed for it, for the compromise and the board of directors," and this lawyer is not supposed to cut us to pieces at the hearing.

We resume of course. The judge has the - our witness on the stand and turns to this lawyer who's been there for many years and the lawyer says, "I have no more questions."

LL: [Laughter]

SJ: Then for half an hour later or so, I went out on the sidewalk waiting for the [Unintelligible] to go to the airport. There were the Land O'Lakes people and of course, they saw me there and they saw – and they knew what had happened, so they said, “In lieu of what has just happened, we are leaving for Minneapolis right away.” They didn't stay for the hearing.

These hearings are terribly dramatic at times including the one at Syracuse where we had the NYU professor Jules Backman who was a very good economist but he was a city professor – economist, so the lawyer on the other side thinks he's going to win over him. Tear him to pieces. The first question that this lawyer gets up and his name was [Cook] and there was a big crowd there. Maybe 500 people and they are watching this proceeding. His first question, “Before you begin on this formula that has been devised, would you please just tell me what is your agricultural background?”

Just as quick as could be, Jules Backman replied, “I'm a member of the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens.” [Laughter] The crowd just roared because the lawyer who had thought when he asked him to relate his agricultural background and he would have an awe and say, “You really didn't have any and therefore, why should you – anything you say be considered on an agricultural pricing?” The other lawyer was just deflated. He sat right down. He didn't stand up any longer so there were lots of dramatic moments there but to get back to the compact, when [Bob Jack] came and Doug Carlson and the others and we had one other meeting including farmers from Eastern Connecticut and Jack here.

But the first time, the question he asked me, “Should we pursue this or not?” I said, “The answer is very easy. You would have to pursue it. I don't think you'll ever get one. I think the chances are remote. Maybe only one in 10 but if you have any chance at all in having farmer members, you have to fight for it. You have to ask for it and you have to fight for it. It doesn't mean that your economist for Agri-Mark has to spend all his time on it because there are other things he has time to spend on but he has to spend a good amount of time on the compact. The compact will have to be identical in wording. It will have to be passed by each branch of the legislature in each state without changing a word in it and it will have to be signed by a Governor of the six states.”

It was because of that I said, “The chances of that are not very good but I think you have to try it.” That's where I was wrong that they not only tried it but succeeded. Then the question of location differentials came up or zone differentials because of location differentials who are outlawed by the Supreme Court and who had been dead ever since. Zone differentials still lived which are a different animal and not as good for Connecticut farmers.

LL: What is the zone?

SJ: That's setting a different price for – to the farmers for milk if you're 200 miles from Boston City than 100, getting a bigger price if you're near the big consuming area and a lower price outside but nothing being taken out of the pool which was done with the location differential. This is a charge to the dealer that is carried through to the farmer.

LL: What is the pool?

SJ: The pool is we have equalization pools where under federal orders and now under all orders for a few times, we have in Philadelphia for years, individual pools where a the farmer got paid according to the use of the dealer where the milk was sold. If it was sold where it was 100% Class I, you got the Class I price. If 50% was in cheese, you got a [Unintelligible] price and pooling was when you - the dealers put all of the milk in the pot so to speak into a pool and then they pay it out and they can use a different differential from the pay outside than the pay inside.

That lesson is lesson number one in any school or milk marketing of the difference between pay in and pay out. You can have a butter fat differential that's different, the pay inside than the pay outside say. They are different. You have a pool and most of the people didn't like these individual [Unintelligible] pools and they were finally terminated over a period of time just as for most prices, resell price fixing is terminated. It's not terminated in Maine yet and Vermont has it up in Burlington yet state controlled but you don't have it in state pricing control in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire.

But on the compact, I was asked to review it. I wasn't the main one but the people from Litchfield County and the rest of the state wanted to know and they said, "Shouldn't there be something in there that the payment out of the pool would be higher like the zone differentials, if you're near the dealer than if you're far?"

Really, they didn't – they said, "In order to get six governors and 12 branches of the legislation, I'm afraid if we put that in, it never will pass." But we will put in and they put in something that I'd have to have the wording before me. That was a little different where they would be, "Write the payment to another production increased or decreased more in Vermont than it does in Connecticut." We'd be putting it in that way and we had to put it in a way that you weren't going to get fighting in New England or if you were fighting, it never would pass.

LL: Yes.

SJ: Then before that, Connecticut farmers wanted something more that really didn't have a chance. About that, I went to regional meetings out in Litchfield County and a guy there from [Unintelligible] went and some others. But anyhow, the compact was passed and then you had to have it pass through Congress.

LL: Yes. I was -

SJ: And together through Congress, I wasn't close to how they got it through because you have this opposition all the time but there was some trading compromises and not knowing that well enough, I'll just skip what was done to get it through Congress.

LL: Let's talk about for a minute the changes in Connecticut. We have so many fewer dairy farms and we have production that's similar. What do you think have been some of the biggest causes for people getting out of the dairy business and have either changed their land to other agricultural products? They've gotten out of it in different ways.

SJ: They've done this in Connecticut, in Vermont, in Minnesota, in Illinois. Farmers everywhere, they're a fewer number than there were a year ago or five years ago or 10 so we're not looking at an isolated instance of Connecticut. It was unusual. Now, they did go out a little faster where they could sell their land for development and so they did go out faster and [grow] that one. They went out faster in Ohio where there's practically none left now. This is just part of the economy of size you can make more money in dairy farming if you're a larger dairy farm.

LL: You had to really get big in order to...

SJ: You had to get big to survive. Just the same way as wheat farmers did and the soy beans farmers and the -

LL: And grocery stores.

SJ: And grocery stores, they all had to get bigger to survive. If you have 10 cows or 20 or 30, you aren't going to make a living out of your cows. Now they try a little bit. Some young spirited will have. Some work at the farm and just sell us some products and maybe have organic milk and so on but as far as being substantial agriculture, forget about it. I wish them well, those that are trying but it's – there are few but there are very few that can make a living out there.

LL: What do [Unintelligible] colleagues? You talked about people you've known through these hearings and through your research and so on. Do you still stay in contact? Are there any that have remained friends over the years?

SJ: Yes. I go to the annual meeting each year down at the - that hotel in Norwich which was the annual meeting back with [Crosstalk].

LL: It's the Ramada Inn now.

SJ: Ramada Inn. I've gone there. I missed one year because they were moving my office that day. I had to be here but I went this year again and usually, [Unintelligible] Arnie, who has the cows over here and goes and [Bill Brown's] successor is a woman who's doing very well on the extension. She [grows] and she drove, and so I go to that. [Unintelligible] Johnston the manager and the president of Agri-Mark is at this meeting down there at the hotel and so I meet these people. [Cushman] was one of our grad students and he's down...

LL: I'm going to interview him, too.

SJ: See, he takes the root. Our farmers, as long as it pays and if it doesn't pay, they won't farm. He doesn't take the crying approach at all. Not that things are desperate and he takes view of it. You've got to do things right to make a living and I'm trying it. If it doesn't work, I am out

LL: What is some of the key – I mean I could get another tape. What were some of the key changes in the research over the years? Either how it was done or who you did it with or...?

SJ: [Pause] Quite a bit of the research was with cooperatives and the extension and there's not very much that's done anymore. The cooperatives feel pretty much if anything's done, we've got to do it ourselves. The University of Connecticut won't help us. The people at the University of Vermont won't help us. We've got to deal with it ourselves and pay for it ourselves.

LL: So, they hired consultants.

SJ: Then I was a consultant after I retired here. First with the New York, New England dairy coop coordinating committee which covers them from Philadelphia up to Maine and then I was consultant with the [Unintelligible] milk and I was with them for five years and another for five years or more. I even met with the general manager of [Hood] when they were deciding whether or not to buy one and I gave them my conclusion was – that was Agway was the one that got the stock and lost a lot of money on it. That put them on a stool of higher price. You've got to get the price down and if you do buy, you've got to take – pay attention to management output. On cooperatives – and remote producers consult. I'll bring that in.

LL: Yes.

SJ: That when I came there was – the state had provided for a state wholesale milk producer consult. Three and a colleague and they elected for three year terms and I met with them once a month as three

from each in Hartford in [Le Gare] Hotel or Bond Hotel or some place. We'd have dinner and we'd meet the governor once a year. We'd have an annual picnic once a year and every meeting I went to, [Don Henryberg] would be present, the state administrator. Ken Geyer would be present and I would be present.

The three of us would have the program of the day and the day would last from 10:00 until 2:00 in the afternoon or 3:00 and we did that – see, that meant we did it at every – at 12 meetings say from University. Then we went to the counties. To the County Producer Consult meetings, Don Henryberg and I went to every meeting and we went in November and December. Now, that's eight meetings and we went every year and we lived in – I stayed in the home frequently of – the home of where we're at right now in Litchfield County; [Henry Moseley]. In his home for three or four or five times. George [Unintelligible] down in Wallingford in his home. Don Thompson down in Brookfield near Danbury. So, it was any distance. Somebody would usually invite Don Henryberg and I to come early and have dinner at their home before we went to the annual meeting as a consult and that continued for close to 20 years. Now, that's a lot of meetings.

LL: That's a lot of friends, too. [Laughter]

(End of Interview)