

# TRANSCRIPT: **KEN LEIBER** **INTERVIEW**

Mr. Ken Leiber · President and CEO of the Texas Livestock Marketing Association

---

## **TRANSCRIPT**

An interview with Mr. Ken Leiber, President and CEO of the Texas Livestock Marketing Association. Leiber is a 1981 graduate from Texas A&M and an inducted member of the Tyrus R. Timm Honor Registry.

This video was posted June 1, 2015 on the Tyrus R. Timm Registry YouTube Channel.

Could you please introduce yourself and tell us a little about your career?

I'm Ken Leiber. I'm a 1981 Texas A&M Class ag eco major, BS degree. I grew up here in the Brazos Valley on a dairy farm and small cow-calf operation. Went to Anderson- Shiro Consolidated High School and never, never had a doubt that I was comin' to A&M as a education, further my education.

Could you tell us a little about your experiences at Texas A&M?

Well, at A— at A&M was a very exciting time of my life. There, coming from a small graduating class of 20, 24 students to A&M and a large university, even though I was familiar with it, I grew up in the area, it was a whole new experience for me and the, the great excitement for me was meeting so many people from so many different walks of life, all over the country, all over Texas as well, all over the country. The professors and the ag eco degree program was something that, that was a hand-in-glove fit for me from the very first day when I chose it as my career, my education choice, and, you know, I can't say how much that those professors really brought educational life to me and brought it on a personal level. Even though there'd be large classes, their, their personal involvement was great. Now on the other side of it, there's a great social life here, too, and although I, I grew up on a dairy farm and had to milk cows, and come to school, and go back and milk cows, I would come back sometimes to party and have fun through there, so I, it was a, it was a busy time but I, I really enjoyed the friendships that I've made that have lasted a lifetime, the, the sporting events and the things that I participated in, or we're gung ho, tremendous and yeah, and at the end a great education, well-rounded opportunity to advance my career, so that's nothing but a great idea of memories from, for A&M.

Can you describe your early career?

I, after I graduated, well as I graduated a semester early and went to work in Houston for the Federal Intermediate Credit Bank as a credit review and operations reviewer, they were going through a process of, of bringing in young, expanding the department and bringing in some young people to train 'em both in the credit and the auditing side of that, so I really got a great opportunity to move into an on-the-job experience in credit training and in, in the financial auditing prospect in our basis of that. It also was a tough time in agriculture, and so in traveling around to the production credit associations and the other financial institutions that discounted funds at the Federal Intermediate Credit Bank, we would, we'd do a two-week-on, two-week-off review process at, at the different PCAs and OFIs around the state. I got to see tremendous professional differences in how you loan to agriculture, how you ran operations, how you ran on lending shop. I got to see the diversity of the ag, agricultural production in the state, and, and I got to see the, the needs for a disciplined approach in the processes and, and in the checks and controls and balances through that, through that exposure. I was able to get a lot of experience in about a two and a half year window of doing that and, and got a lot of responsibility because of the expansion that was going on within the department at that time. After that, I had the opportunity to, because of that, I had the opportunity to go to my president part for National Finance Credit Corporation of Texas, which was another financial institution doing business, and so I was able to, to know that company, and they were able to know me or have exposure to me as an employee before they hired me, and it's been a great fit, and I've expanded as I've stayed with that company. For the last 32 years, I've expanded within, with the sister, the parent organization and a sister organization and held opportunities in livestock marketing and the commodities, brokering, as well as the livestock financing business.

What advice do you have for students of Agricultural Economics?

Take advantage of everything you, you're offered here. Just don't leave any stones unturned. There's so many things to be, to be participating in; take advantage of those. Go to get to know your professor. Spend some time with them. Make it a, make it a point, get to personally know each professor on some level because it just, it adds so much more to your education process, and it will add so much more into the networking side of your, of your needs way beyond your college years through there. The ag eco department is, is top notch in the country, in my opinion, and has been for decades, and that's tough to do and maintain, so that, there's a lot of history here and a lot of opportunities that aren't afforded at other schools that have the same curriculum there. The degree plan is, is tremendously flexible and, and broad

Mr. Ken Leiber | Transcript  
Tyrus R. Timm Honor Registry | Department of Agricultural Economics | Texas A&M University

to allow you to, to advance your career in many different directions, and take advantage of that broadness because I can guarantee you'll need it out in the business world.

How were you able to manage time for family, work and other priorities throughout your career?

Well, that's, it's always a tough balance to, to balance goals and deadlines and things with, at work, unless you have some of those in your own personal life, too, and so if you have those, you can balance the achievement of those goals a little better. The first, the first thing you need is a very nice, is a very supporting and understanding spouse as, and that's, that's needed by anyone, and that's good advice to balance your whole life, but, you know, keep in perspective where your goals are, what you want out of life, and that life is not just one-dimensional, and it's not just going to be defined by one thing in your business or one thing in your personal life. It's going to be an ongoing conglomerate of, of all of your life, and, and the balance that you, you bring to that will bring you happiness I think, but it also will help you in each area of your life through there.

In your opinion, what does it take to achieve success?

Well, I really believe that success is a journey, not a destination, and so the first thing is you just have to show up and be engaged in want it. It's, it's a fairly simple process of, of finding something that you really enjoy doing and, and then find a way to succeed at that, and that's what I would, I would say the success comes in the journey that you, you set for your life, and that way you can have success in, in the different turns and even in the ups and downs that, that sometimes you'll find your success comes right after what you thought was a failure through there. So, to me, you want to not get caught— you need to have your goals but you don't want to get caught up on those goals and miss the success that you get in the achieving and the, and the process of moving toward that goal.

What are your thoughts on being selected to the Tyrus R. Timm Honor Registry?

Well, it's, it's a great honor to me to be recognized for that. From your alma mater, the, it's been a big part of my life and it's... I've got three daughters who've all gone to A&M through there. So, got really close roots growing up in the Brazos Valley here. I've been and Aggie all my life and so, you know, the honor to be recognized as, as someone who came through the ag eco apartment that had a measure of success, I, I wouldn't have had that without A&M.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Just that... sing praises for A&M, and it's a great day in Aggieland. Gig 'em.

Mr. Ken Leiber | Transcript  
Tyus R. Timm Honor Registry | Department of Agricultural Economics | Texas A&M University

Transcribed by  
Isabella Garza  
July 29, 2020