kindex®
< Scan QR to view this original record online, or visit https://ezratclark.kindex.org/s/193665

Title: **1981-interview_p118**
Provenance: **Provided to the Ezra T. Clark Family Organization Library by Bryan Clark, son of the late Ralph Clark**
Transcript of an Oral History, conducted by Clark S. and Ruth Knowlton of Orson and Lucile Clark

Category: **Volume**
Person:
Date: **11/23/1981**

Orson Clark: They had a factory at Nyssa.

Interviewer: When did you plant your sugar beets.

Orson Clark: Just as soon as the ground was dried off, as soon as you could get the seed in. I didn't go too much for sugar beets, but there were a lot of them that did.

Lucille Clark: You had to have too much machinery.

Interviewer: I know all this heavy commercialization and this expensive harvesting machinery and so on really hurts the small farmer. It pushes him right out of business doesn't it?

Orson Clark: $29,000 for a tractor now, think of that! They have got to raise a lot to produce something to pay for it.

Ruth Knowlton: I have often wondered or conjectured, with energy like it is today and the problems that the farmer wouldn't be smart to go back to horses and the old plow.

Orson Clark: Well, it wouldn't produce enough to pay his horses.

Ruth Knowlton: It would cut down on his ability to produce or the number of acres he could do and the food he could yield.

Interviewer: You know in the midwest there are farmers who are going back to horses now.

Orson Clark: Well they could do. They raise pretty much a specialized crop don't they.

Interviewer: Well, what they found out is that with the high cost of fuel, that if you have sloping land that you are farming the horses will actually produce more than the tractors. I mean that horses are less costly than the tractor in farming hilly land, where the tractor uses a lot of fuel and problems of repairing a tractor and so on. I saw a study and it stated that a good well-broken team of horse is almost worth a tractor, right now. They are not $29,000 but there is an enormous market in the United States right now for well-broken teams. And many farmers, who are farming large amounts, are buying horses to use in the corners of the fields or awkward plots where it is difficult to get a tractor in and things like this. But what they have had to do is set up special schools to teach farmers how to work with horses. They have never worked with horses before.

Ruth Knowlton: Is there any of this going on, where groups of farmers are getting together in owning the machinery jointly? A sort of co-op thing for machinery.

Orson Clark: I guess some of them do. Our folks kept pretty much