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8-1-2001

Welcome

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Owens, John, "Welcome" (2001). *John Owens: Speeches & Appearances.* Paper 27.
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WELCOME
PANHANDLE RESEARCH AND EXTENSION CENTER
AUGUST 1, 2001
JOHN C. OWENS

It is a real treat for me and my wife Virginia to be with you in Scottsbluff today. Like you, Virginia and I have roots in our nation's High Plains – it's just that our roots first were planted further south, in the High Plains of Texas, where we grew up. I consider it a real pleasure to have this opportunity to join Chuck Hibberd and all who are part of the University of Nebraska Panhandle Research and Extension Center in welcoming you here.

I'm delighted to join you here at the Panhandle center for several reasons. First off, I welcome this opportunity to meet and visit with you. I look forward to hearing what you have to say. Getting to know and talk with Nebraska's residents is one of the real pleasures of my new job, and has been since I started in January. I want to know what you identify as Nebraska's and Nebraskans' needs. I want to know what you dream for yourselves and your children. I want to know what you see as the greatest challenges facing agriculture, natural resources, people and communities in Nebraska now, and in the coming years. I want to know how you think the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources can assist Nebraska in meeting its needs and realizing its dreams.

I hold a deep-seated belief that those of us who work in land-grant universities must always include our constituents in the process of helping set the direction of our research and extension education programs, and we must always remember that people are looking to us to be of service to Nebraska. I welcome what you have to say.

Another reason I'm so pleased to be here is that I think today we'll see and hear about the land-grant university mission in action, and that always is a joy to me. I am a fervent believer in the land-grant universities and the mission entrusted to them. That mission, true when land-grant universities first were established and just as true today, is to take the resources, riches, and technologies of the university to the people of the state. We in the Institute do that through classes on campus and research and extension education programs throughout Nebraska, including the research and extension education programs conducted here at the Panhandle Research and Extension Center.

As part of our land-grant university mission, we in the Institute discover knowledge through research in our focus areas of food, agriculture and agribusiness systems, natural resources, and human resources. Once discovered, we transfer our new knowledge in our classrooms and teaching laboratories, and through our statewide extension education program, which is a key component of any land-grant

university and a very key part of the University of Nebraska.

Sometimes my job requires me to spend a great deal of time in meetings where we seem to talk more about budgets and administrative matters than we do the land-grant university mission. That's why I'm doubly glad today to be here at the Panhandle Center, where every day, people help us effectively and efficiently further that mission. I look forward to visiting with all of you.

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