



WE CAN

HANDLE

THE TRUTH

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2025 | 018

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Growing up on a farm in Iowa, I believed one thing for sure: we earned everything. My family worked their asses off, gambling each year on weather and prices. My grandparents passed the farm down. I watched my dad pour sweat into every acre. In my mind, nobody handed us anything.

Then I learned the parts of the story we never talked about that knocked me back.

The U.S. government gave away roughly 270 million acres, about 10% of the country, mostly land taken from Indigenous communities, and it overwhelmingly benefited White families. Black families who tried to claim land were met with violence, discrimination at land offices, and being pushed off what they'd built.

I also learned how the USDA helped White farmers grow and survive through loans and support programs, while Black farmers were routinely denied those same opportunities for decades.

So yes, my grandparents worked hard. My parents did too. But hard work is not the whole story for what we were able to keep, grow, and pass on.

This isn't guilt talking. It's just math and history. The question now is whether I'm willing to tell the truth about how advantage works, and whether I'll support policies and practices that actually level the field.