

Loren Doll
Dodge City, Kan.
Loren Doll, Incorporated
Products Raised or Grown: Cattle
Size of Operation: 12,000 head, 2,000 acres
In Business Since: before 1962
Farm Credit Partner: High Plains Farm Credit
Working with Farm Credit Since: before 1972



Loren Doll, now in his 80s, spent most of his working career with Irsik & Doll Company, beginning in 1961 until his retirement from the company in 1989. In 1982, he formed Loren Doll, Inc. (LDI), a family corporation owned by Loren and Veleeta Doll and their six children. LDI began operations in 1985 with the purchase of Wilroads Feed Yard. The corporation has expanded over the years and now includes four divisions: Wilroads Feed Yard, Finest Beef Grow Yard, Cheyenne Cattle Company and Wilroads Farms.

Wilroads Feed Yard is a 12,000 head finishing yard where feeder cattle are fed specially formulated rations to grow to their final weight of 1,200 – 1,400 pounds. Loren’s son, Steve Doll, has managed the finish yard since 1985. With an industry trend of less retained ownership from cattle producers, many feed yards have been forced to buy and feed more of their own cattle to maintain yard occupancy. Consequently, Cheyenne Cattle Company (another LDI entity) typically owns more than 60% of the yard’s capacity.

Finest Beef Grow Yard is a backgrounding facility growing 400 pound stocker cattle to feeder weight of 700+ pounds, either in the grow facility or out on pasture, before sending them to the feed yard. Cheyenne Cattle typically owns more than 90% of the 3,500 head capacity Finest Beef manages in its facility and out on pasture.

Pasture is provided by Wilroads Farms, a 2,000 acre farming operation. This farm produces corn for silage, used to provide necessary roughage for the cattle at both yards, as well as forage crops for grazing and hay production. Virtually all crops are used in some form of feed production and are not sold on the open market. Normally, 100% of all irrigated acreage is planted back to rye or wheat in the fall for grazing.

The greatest benefit from the integration of all four company entities is the flexibility to make adjustments to complement one another. “We’re a good example of a small scale, vertically integrated company. Our approach is not all that common,” says John Oldham, Loren’s son-in-law and manager of the grow yard and farming operation. “Astute management, backed by a strong lender, is of major importance,” adds Loren. “High Plains Farm Credit has proven to be an excellent source of funds. They understand the workings of beef and grain production.”