

Written Profile



Farm: Cheyenne Trail Ranch

Location: Osborne County, Kansas

Date of Origination: 1892

Industry Sector(s): Wheat, Corn, Milo, Soybeans, Alfalfa,
Cover Crops, Beef Cattle

"I try to farm and ranch in nature's image," shares Scott Sigle of Cheyenne Trail Ranch. Using no-till practices, diversifying crop rotations, and integrating cover crops are just a few of the strategies he has employed to enhance the sustainability of his Century Farm. We are thankful for the contribution made by Scott and his family, and we are excited to share their family's story of **Agriculture's Lasting Heritage**.

The farm originated thanks to the foresight and investment of John A. Spoon and his wife Laura A. Spoon, great grandparents of Scott Sigle. Spoon and his wife initially purchased 130 acres, including the original homestead, on October 24th, 1892. A blacksmith by trade, Spoon was born in Indiana in 1864 and moved to Kansas in the late 1880's. He opened a blacksmith shop in the Cheyenne Community in Jackson Township, Osborne County Kansas, while farming his new land. Following his initial land purchase, he subsequently purchased 160 acres on February 13th, 1899, and 80 acres on March 18th, 1915. As a farmer and manager of the land, Spoon made additional purchases but later sold them. The original 370 acres of land in the section, as well as additional land, was deeded to Spoon's five children on February 15th, 1956.

The family tradition continued as (Lura) Faye Spoon, John Spoon's daughter, married Forrest Applegate. Forrest's father and grandmother Homesteaded and Timber Claimed land two miles north of section 23, where the Spoon farm was located. "Grandad Applegate was a farmer," shares grandson Scott Sigle. "He and Grandmother Faye purchased this land from her siblings and lived there for a time." They later moved to the Applegate Timber Claim farmstead, which Scott Sigle's brother now owns and farms.

Section 23 was later passed on to Joyce Williams, daughter of Faye and Forrest Applegate, and aunt to Scott Sigle. Joyce and her husband were not farmers by trade, and in an effort to sustain the operation, rented the land to relatives Harvey and Cecil Sigle. Harvey and Cecil farmed the land until they retired in 1978. At this time, Scott Sigle was 23 years old and proud owner of another plot of land just down the road. He was excited to have the opportunity to purchase the historic Section 23 when his aunt offered the land for sale.

Section 23 is now known as Cheyenne Trail Ranch. The name comes from the trail traveled frequently by the Cheyenne Indians and the U.S. Cavalry, which stopped at this location to water and rest. Many things have changed on the ranch, yet the tradition of family farming and ranching remains the same. The old barns and grainery have long since disappeared, replaced by a modern machine shed and grain bins. Scott Sigle is convinced that the availability of well water on his farm to water livestock and use for human consumption is what has allowed the farm to survive for over a century. Most of the other wells in the area went dry in the 1930s.

The family's commitment to sustainable practices has enabled the farm to survive and thrive. In addition to the strategies mentioned earlier, Sigle uses management-intensive grazing to rebuild the plant diversity and restructure the soil and rangeland. "It takes time, but measurable results are being made. All this is being done with less inputs and a healthier bottom line than just a few years ago," he shares.

Today Scott and his wife, as well as their son and his wife, continue to farm because, "we love the land (and) the community in which we live and work." They enjoy watching the things they plant and raise, and appreciate the opportunity to, "improve what the Lord has entrusted us with." We appreciate the commitment and investment made by the generations farming Cheyenne Trail Ranch, and we celebrate their contribution to **Agriculture's Lasting Heritage**.