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## Doyle Creek Land and Cattle Company

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MILLS FAMILY  
*Doyle Creek Land & Cattle Company*

## *Doyle Creek Land & Cattle Company*

Doyle Creek Land & Cattle Company is dedicated to improvement of the beef industry and is continually striving to achieve excellence in their commercial cow-calf operation. Located in the Flint Hills of Kansas, Doyle Creek consists of three ranches owned and operated by Randy and Judy (Strait) Mills and their two daughters. Mary and Frank



Harper who farm and ranch in Sedgwick, Kansas and have two daughters, Annie, age 10 and Cora, age 6. Sara and Troy Dawson who live at the Turkey Springs Ranch and have two daughters, Grace, age 8 and Emma, age 6.

The Ranch in Marion County was established in the mid-1950s by Judy's father, F.W. Strait, and became known as the Strait Ranch. At that time the ranch was merely a family hobby and a weekend retreat and consisted of

6,000 acres. It continued to expand through the 1960's but by 1969 Randy and Judy became involved full time in the operation. That same year the Mills purchased the 1882 home of Patrick Doyle which adjoined the ranch.

Through the years the ranch continued to grow and by 1980 the ranch was owned and operated entirely by the Mills Family.

The original part of the ranch is situated on Doyle Creek – so named



after Patrick Doyle, the first settler in Marion County. The historic, limestone, two-story house built by Mr. Doyle in 1882 was placed on the National Historical Register by Judy in November, 1997 and has been home to the Mills family for 40 years. Thus, it seemed only fitting that the ranch derive its official name from the very creek and home where it was located.

Presently, Doyle Creek Land and Cattle Co., Inc., encompasses over 30,000 acres and consists of three ranches. Doyle Creek Ranch serves as the main headquarters and is located in Marion County just southeast of Florence. The Gilmore Creek Ranch lies 2 miles northwest of the El Dorado Reservoir in northeast Butler County. The little bluestem grass is home to the majority of the summer grazing. Being only the second owners of the Turkey Springs Ranch, it originated in the early 1860's by the Jones Family and is located on Turkey Springs in southeastern Chase County. Nestled

deep in Flint Hills territory, one can flash back to the early 1800s and experience the real Flint Hills by riding across the rolling prairie.

Native bluestem pasture is the primary feed source on the ranches, and all units utilize brome grass for pasture and hay. Emphasis is placed on improving the ecology of the ranch so it can sustain future generations. Quality beef is the goal, and to accomplish this goal, Doyle Creek strictly adheres to Beef Quality Assurance guidelines. In order to meet these objectives, the ranch uses EPDs, herd carcass information, an artificial insemination program for developing heifers, full brother bulls for herd improvement, and mandatory record keeping by all ranch associates. These fundamentals are the basis for an improved herd. The uniform genetics resulting from embryo transfer or natural mating to full brother bull batteries make replacement heifers from Doyle Creek Cattle Company in high demand. Using the embryo transfer

program as a profit center may be one of the most economically sound decisions implemented on the ranch in the last 20 years.

Today, the Mills family continues to strive for better beef for the consumer while diversifying into the Agri-Tourism business. Randy still remains at the helm on the beef side with ranch manager Clint Cope, son-in-law, Troy, and associates Alan Black and Clint Coleman. While Judy manages the books and record keeping, daughter, Sara, updates and oversees the cattle records and computer database. The

two have partnered to open the Doyle Creek Mercantile (gift store) and Corral (party room). They have also joined forces with ranch manager Clint Cope and wife, Sarah, to open the Bunkhouse Bed and Breakfast. Along with ranch involvement, daughter, Mary, and husband, Frank, formed Prairie Point Outdoors, LLC, for recreational hunting at the Gilmore Creek Ranch.

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*Judy Mills and Sara Dawson*

BIG BLUE STEM

