

4L Grazing, LLC, formed in 2004, is the operating company of The Ferrell Ranch. 4L Grazing is structured to become an employee-owned business that reserves exclusive rights to lease The Ferrell Ranch. The enterprise mix of the business varies from one year to another depending on various factors. It has a custom grazing enterprise of yearling stockers and/or cow/calf pairs that serve as a market-risk management tool and helps to improve cashflow needs of the business. In addition, 4L Grazing owns a seasonal yearling stocker enterprise along with a cow/calf enterprise that focuses on developing adapted, efficient animals that are managed in a way that improves the health of the land and the wellbeing of the people working with it. Our economic objectives are to capture inventory value increases (appreciation) of all classes of livestock on the roster. The business has added a meat goat enterprise that is intended to turn invasive and woody species into a valuable forage asset allowing us to improve rangeland health while increasing gross margin per acre by adding a species whose diet is different from that of cattle.

The Ferrell Ranch is approximately 7,100 acres of deeded land located in Butler, Elk and Greenwood Counties in the scenic Flint Hills of southeastern Kansas. Except for 140 acres near the town of Beaumont, the acres are all contiguous. The property ranges in elevation from 1300 ft. to 1600 ft. The habitat type is classic native tallgrass prairie with some deciduous gallery forest along the riparian areas. The 30-year average annual rainfall is 37 inches. Livestock water is provided by pipelines, wells, creeks, springs, and ponds. 4L Grazing and the Ferrell Ranch work in collaboration with each other to continually improve the stock water infrastructure on the ranch. They have just recently completed a major project that includes a large solar pumping station sourcing water from a reliable pond and delivering into a network of stock tanks and quick connect points designed to deliver high flows of water strategically, allowing us to manage the grazing in a manner that will improve distribution, stock density and ultimately plant vigor and growth.

Fence types are four and five wire barbed-wire fences both conventional and suspension. There are about 70 miles of exterior and interior barbed-wire fencing on the property. Interior paddock division fences are either single or double strand electric fence. The entire property has been subdivided into paddocks ranging in size from 40 to 150 acres and, depending on objectives, can then be broken into smaller paddocks using temporary electric fencing. We consolidate the number of herds on the ranch (and hence increase the herd size) down to as few as two and up to no more than four which greatly reduces labor demands and improves rangeland health through increased plant recovery periods. There is a good set of livestock processing, loading/unloading facilities with a ground scale and access to an all-weather public road on the property.

Much of the ranch and livestock work is completed on ATV's and UTV's although there are times of the year, classes of livestock, and areas of the ranch that are more conducive to working off horseback, but this is partly dependent upon labor demands and whether we can complete more tasks (i.e., temporary electric fencing) efficiently using a four-wheeler versus horses. Good stock dogs are pivotal the ranches success and are in regular use around the ranch daily. Sound stockmanship practices that reduce stress and illness in livestock under our care are equally essential to the health and wellbeing of both the people and livestock.