

# **Our Soil Grows People**

Ferrell Ranch Apprentice Program



# Agriculture Needs the Next Generation

***Innovative talent, experiential expertise, and regenerative practices are critical to long-term sustainability***

- Climate change is happening in real time. Extreme weather events and ongoing, chronic effects impact farms and ranches across the country
- Society at large is increasingly attuned to environmental degradation and the negative effects of industrial agriculture
- Retiring agrarians have difficulty finding successors capable of perpetuating regenerative practices
- Progressive stakeholders are looking for personnel who are competent in regenerative practices
- Physical isolation along with economic uncertainty are psychologically challenging

# **Our Response → “Our Soil Grows People”**

***The Ferrell Ranch is launching a differentiated apprentice program to educate and nurture a new generation of resilient agrarians***

***Making a robust investment in the growth of dedicated individuals could transform agriculture as we know it***

***“When Nature has work to be done, she creates a genius to do it.”  
... Ralph Waldo Emerson***



# Why ... Ferrell Ranch Apprentice Program?

***The Ferrell Ranch is uniquely positioned to offer this program by being transparent about the issues we have encountered in our 100+ year history***

- Challenging the way we think will change the way we practice agriculture
- Life itself is the great teacher ... mentor and apprentice are co-learners
- Dialogue about process is critical to resiliency
- Exploring what we don't know holds as much potential as our prior experience
- Addressing our vulnerabilities may be a door to unexpected outcomes





**Our Soil Grows People ...  
and More**



# Our Soil Grows People

*The Ferrell Ranch Apprentice Program is designed to inspire graduates to transform agriculture by adhering to the “triple bottom line”: people, planet, and prosperity*

- **Society (People):** We emphasize the personal and professional growth of each apprentice. We encourage the awakening of each student’s innate knowledge.
- **Ecology (Planet):** 4L Grazing leverages our experience and the expertise of our broad network to bring the best of regenerative practices to the Ferrell Ranch
- **Economy (Prosperity):** We lead with transparency by sharing our holistic decision-making process with every student

# An Overview of the Apprentice Program



## ***Our eight-month program was created to give apprentices a hands-on introduction to regenerative agriculture***

- 4L Grazing is the operating company that manages the Ferrell Ranch. The company oversees a diversified portfolio of enterprises including cattle, goats, sheep, poultry and custom grazing. We no longer have bison or Corrientes on the ranch.
- We prioritize the experiential education of the apprentice providing staff who regard themselves as mentors.
- This interactive experience highlights holistic management techniques, personal mission development, and individual coaching to elevate self-efficacy.
- The 7100-acre Ferrell Ranch is in the Flint Hills of Kansas which is the largest tract of intact Tallgrass Prairie in North America: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flint\\_Hills](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flint_Hills). We are near the small town of Beaumont ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beaumont,\\_Kansas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beaumont,_Kansas)) which is 50 miles east of Wichita, the largest city in the state.



# Our Ranch is An Educational Ecosystem

***We provide experiential learning designed to elevate the competence and confidence of the apprentice***

## **Educational Components**

- PCM (Process Communication Model) assessment and use
- An introduction to WOTB (Working On The Business)
- Exposure to economic and financial planning
- Participation in weekly operational meetings
- Implementation of holistic planned grazing
- Training in low-stress livestock handling
- Basic manual skills

## **Optional Local & Regional Events**

- Tallgrass Legacy Alliance meetings
- K-State Extension sponsored workshops
- On-line Kansas Leadership Center training
- Beaumont Community Association meetings and events

# Potential Program Outcomes

***Our Soil Grows People* will enhance the natural abilities of the apprentice so that they have the potential of a career in ranching**

- The apprentice will have an elevated understanding of self-efficacy
- The apprentice will gain a basic understanding of successful ranching strategies
- The apprentice will have a basic understanding of the economics and finance of ranching
- The apprentice will gain the practical manual skills needed for employment in ranching
- The apprentice will have gained crucial skills in leadership and team building



# Program Benefits

*The following costs are paid by 4L Grazing and the Ferrell Ranch*

Apprentice Support Stipend	\$650/month
Lodging	\$250/month
Medical Insurance *	\$300/month
Workman's Compensation Insurance *	\$50/month
Individualized self-efficacy training and counseling *	\$200/month
Optional attendance at local or regional workshops	TBD
<b>Estimated Total Benefit</b>	<b>~\$1450/month</b>

\*Estimate



**Supporting Our Vision**



# Participate In Our Program

***We wish to recruit an apprentice to begin Q1 of 2021***

**We are asking for support in the following ways:**

1. Share this opportunity with persons who are interested in apprentice programs
2. Introduce us to coordinators of existing apprentice programs
3. Introduce us to persons or organizations interested in developing apprentice programs



**Appendix**



# About Our Ranch Community

John Wagner became our ranch manager in 2017. He has a degree in Rangeland Ecology and Watershed Management with extensive experience in apprentice programs.

Pete Ferrell, owner and former ranch manager, has experience working in adult education, wind power development, direct marketing, and service to numerous non-profit and civic boards.

Kay Bartel Ferrell joined our ranch community in 2012. With degrees in Communication Sciences and Educational Administration, Kay brings the insight of a lifelong career in leadership, adult learning, and human resources.

Brandi McCoy joined our community in October of 2020. With a degree in Animal Science and Natural Resources, she is interested in exploring independent, auxiliary ranch enterprises.

The Ferrell Ranch was founded in 1888 by Pete's great-grandfather. John Wagner represents the 5<sup>th</sup> generation (and 1<sup>st</sup> non-family member) to manage the ranch.

# Thank You!

**For more information, please contact:**

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Awards: [www.waterandenergyprogress.org/case\\_studies.php?id=6](http://www.waterandenergyprogress.org/case_studies.php?id=6)