

Farm Family of the Year- Gerald and Joyce Willsie



When you google the Gerald Willsie family you will find accolades spanning many years. From Canadian Steer Wrestling Champion to All Around Cowboy to 4H champion steer to FCA Rodeo Family of the Year. But what you often don't hear about are the tireless hours spent on this century family farm or the countless hours spent volunteering in the community.

Gerald and Joyce Willsie are long standing members of their community and respected farmers in Clearwater County. Farming 16 quarters and 350 head of beef cows is no mean feat and it is therefore not surprising that the whole family gets involved. Gerald and Joyce and their three daughters Brittany, Erin and Katelynn along with Gerald's parents Leroy and Diane all pull together to make this farming operation a success.

Although much of the Willsie farm practices are based on the traditional way of life, rodeos, cattle trails, and working with horses they are also progressive in their desire for sustainable agriculture. Minimizing confined feeding areas, offsite watering, diligent weed control, stockpiling grass and rotational grazing are all methods of management that the Willsie's have adopted to move their farm forward in the 21st century.

The Willsie family have farmed in the Caroline area for over one hundred years and are still very active in the community. Despite the huge demands from their farm life they still find time to volunteer and give back to many groups in the area.

Both Joyce and Gerald volunteer with their local 4H beef club as leaders and have taken other positions on the executive. Joyce has spent many years coaching basketball and, as well as driving school bus, drives sports teams to their games and events. She is active on the school parent council and also volunteers with Caroline Dance West as treasurer. Their volunteer spirit is strong and many groups are grateful for the expertise, energy and time that the Willsies dedicate on a daily basis in their community.