

Innovation from

DESPERATION



Fresh out of his initial year in college, Scot Wylie decided to accompany his father on a trip to test a prototype for a sunflower harvester. As he sat on top of the cab of a combine, taking photographs of the mechanics of the machine, Wylie realized exactly what he wanted to do for the rest of his life. For some, finding a career that you are passionate about can take years. For Wylie, all it took was a trip to the Rio Grande Valley.

“I fell in love with being in that environment and the creativity of coming up with solutions to opportunities,” Wylie said. “Not solutions to problems, just opportunities to find a way to do things in agriculture.”

The Rio Grande Valley trip was not the first time Wylie had the opportunity to learn from his business-oriented father. His own business sense put down its initial roots in the shop of his father’s business.

In 1962, Scot’s father, Loy Wylie returned to Petersburg, Texas, and took over the family business - selling propane gas. However, with the discovery of natural gas

in the 1950s, the need for propane gas severely declined. Loy quickly realized that in order to keep his family’s business afloat, he was going to have to find another way to sell propane gas.

“My dad was always an innovator. So, to help increase the market of propane gas, he helped develop a mechanism called flame cultivation,” Wylie said.

Flame cultivation is a non-chemical, weed control system. Loy helped develop the process in West Texas, when he began mounting propane tanks on the belly of tractors. Gas burners ran down the middle of a cotton row and burned Pigweed, a noxious plant for livestock and crops.

Even though Loy’s innovations helped sell more propane, it was only the first of the challenges he would face in his career. As he was driving to work one day, he noticed a cotton test plot growing without weeds. When he looked into it further, he discovered a new chemical in the process of being tested as a weed control substance.

“When they came out with Treflan, my dad just figured that in order for him to survive in the

business he was in, he was going to have to come up with a different way of doing things,” Wylie said. “That’s how he came up with the sprayer business.”

Loy began distributing the chemical Treflan, but realized there wasn’t a way to apply the chemical. Instead of building flame cultivators, Loy took a different route. In the back of his shop, he began building his own spray equipment. Those were the first days of Wylie Manufacturing.

“I always say my family history is innovation from desperation, because we have always run right ahead of change,” Wylie said.

Scot changed paths upon his return to college for his sophomore year. He switched his major to agribusiness and graduated with a bachelor’s degree from Texas Tech University in 1978. After he completed his degree, he moved to the Waco area and worked for a branch of Wylie Manufacturing.

“I was allowed to operate fairly independently,” Wylie said. “My dad didn’t look over my shoulder that much so I learned a lot about the marketing end of the business, the salesmanship and the dynamic of how to sell a product.”

Like his father, Scot soon learned the hard way that he would have to make a shift in the way he was doing business.

“In the early 80s, interest rates reached 16 percent and dealers were no longer able to stock our products on their lots,” Wylie said. “So again out of desperation, I started selling product directly to farmers out of the Waco location.”

From the success of selling to farmers directly, Scot and his father decided to take their business a step further in 1987, by opening a retail direct branch in the Rio Grande Valley and Amarillo area.

“That’s where the concept Wylie Spray Centers came into play,” Wylie said. “It’s been our business model for the last 25 years.”

In 1989, Scot’s father decided it was time for him to retire and for his son to move back to Lubbock and take over as president of Wylie & Son Inc.

“He didn’t completely retire,” Wylie said. “He controlled the finances and was still the visionary of the company. We worked side-by-side and had a great partnership until he became ill in 1999.”



“My family history is innovation from desperation, because we have always run right ahead of change.”

Today, Wylie & Son Inc. employs 260 individuals and has locations in Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas. In 2010, Scot purchased seven full service Case IH agriculture dealerships. In the future, Scot hopes to acquire more Case IH dealerships.

Marketing manager for Wylie & Son Inc., Jim Thompson, said he believes Scot’s leadership is to credit for the level of success Wylie & Son Inc. has found in the last several years.


“Scot is very good at seeing trends and the way markets are going,”

Thompson said. “Therefore, he positions his company and his product mix to fit those trends and stay ahead of the curve.”

Assistant marketing manager, Jennifer Spraberry, said Scot knows firsthand how demanding the agriculture industry can be. She said he prides his company on providing the best customer services and equipment possible on the market.

“When a farmer or rancher buys a piece of equipment from Wylie, Scot dedicates himself to ensuring his employees are not only equipment specialists, but meet each customer’s service needs well after the sale is finalized,” Spraberry said.

Outside of the daily duties of the business, Scot makes sure to give back to the communities. Each year Wylie & Son Inc. funds three different scholarships for Texas Tech University and helps fund research.

Scot said, looking forward to the next five-to-ten years, he has no plans to slow down. Like his father before him, he will continue to work in the industry he loves and fulfill his dream of making a career out of finding solutions to the ever-developing needs of the agricultural community. 

Laurin Spraberry
Anson, Texas

