

Another Conservation Success Story...

Hart County, Georgia

March 2010

EQIP Funds Help Hart County Farmer Transition

John Wallace Vassar has farmed since he was 12-years-old. "Daddy had me plowing when I was small," Vassar said. Once he grew up and started a career in education, Vassar continued to farm in his free time.



Cross-fencing protects a stream on Vassar's land and serves as a buffer.

improves water quality and helps prevent erosion on the stream bank.

An alternative water source is now used to provide hydration to the cattle that graze on 130 acres of the property.

A heavy use area around the watering troughs helps keep the area clean.

"The Vassars are committed to protecting the natural resources for present production of land and for protecting the natural resources for future generations," District Conservationist Forrest Ferguson said.

The EQIP contract has also helped the Vassars convert the previous crop land into permanent grasslands for grazing.

Wallace Vassar said that he appreciates the assistance that the USDA-NRCS has provided. "We've shown a profit now. So, that's how we've benefited."

He farmed part-time and worked full-time as a principal for 39 years until he retired six years ago. Since then, he's been farming full-time.

Vassar who has had a working relationship with the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for several years, applied for an Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) contract to help make a big transition on his farm.

He switched over from row crops to cattle. Although Vassar and his son still plant soybean on a few acres, they mainly concentrate on the 400 cows and calves on the Hart County property.

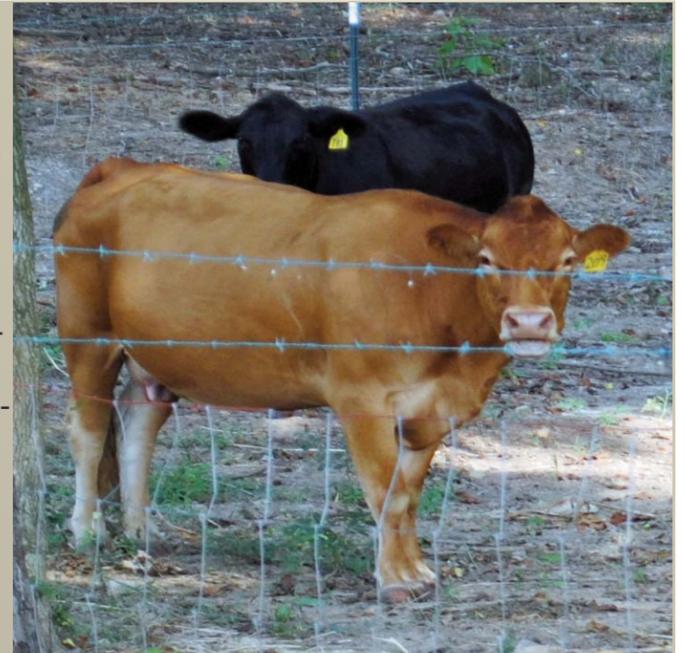
District Conservationist, Forrest Ferguson and staff provided technical assistance to Vassar when the contract was awarded. EQIP funds help offset the costs associated with installing conservation treatments.

"The financial assistance is great," Vassar said.

EQIP enabled John Wallace Vassar to install fencing around a stream located on his property. The fence serves as a buffer between the cattle and the water. This

Vassar said that the installation of conservation measures isn't just a sound financial decision, choosing to protect natural resources is vital to future generations.

"You've got to save the land to make it productive and feed people. If we don't take care of it now, future generations won't have it," Vassar said.



400 cattle now graze on roughly 130 acres of Vassar's property.

**"We've shown a profit now. So, that's how we've benefited."--
John W. Vassar**



Forrest Ferguson, NRCS District Conservationist (Left), and John Wallace Vassar (Right) worked together during Vassar's transition from row crop farming to cattle.

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