

# Another Conservation Success Story...

## Wilkes County, Georgia

April 2011

### Washington Corn Maze Encourages Conservation

Big white signs decorated with distinctive red letters greet anyone visiting Shane Moore's farm in Wilkes County. Not only do these strategically placed signs add character to the 150 acre property, they share agricultural facts with local residents, visitors and passersby.

A conservationist at heart, Shane Moore has found a way to share the importance of conserving natural resources with others.

"He is very dedicated and enthusiastic about conservation, preserving the land, and



Dozens of Black Angus and Hereford cattle roam on Shane Moore's Washington land.

educating the public about conservation," Rory Richardson said. Richardson is a District Conservationist with the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

He has worked with the Moore family for seven years on various projects to improve conservation.

Shane Moore and his family installed the signs around their home a year ago as part of a plan to increase agricultural awareness in their Washington community through agri-tourism.

The Moore's host field trips and tours for school children and adults that live in and around Wilkes County. Tours include a hay ride that winds through a corn maze, a goat farm, cow pastures and wetlands.

In order to address issues of erosion, water quality, improve grazing land for beef cattle and wildlife management, the Moore farm was recently awarded an Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) contract.

This will allow Moore to further address his conservation plans on his 150 acre property.

The EQIP agreement helps cover 50% of the cost associated with implementing conservation measures to address those problems.

"It's a program that helps pay for things that would be difficult to pay for if you had to pay it all alone."

A heavy use area will be installed in a pasture that will include a water trough for the 70 Angus and Hereford cows that are currently on the Moore farm.

The heavy use area protects the soil from erosion and manure. Certain parts of the land that suffer from more serious erosion will undergo critical area treatment. In Moore's case, grass will be planted and top soil will be brought in.

Additional cross fencing will help with livestock exclusion by keeping the cattle out of the stream and improve water quality and prevent erosion on the stream bank.

In addition to the EQIP contract, Moore was awarded a grazing land conservation grant to help improve rotational grazing over the years. Moore said that because of rotational grazing, he uses less fertilizer, less pesticides, and his cattle are easier to handle.

"The cattle see us and they head to the next gate," Moore explained.

As for the wetland management, wood duck boxes will be built. Prescribed burning and planting of hardwood trees will address wildlife needs on the Moore property.

The 43-year-old Shane Moore said that while it takes a lot of time and careful preparation to implement plans for conservation, it is well worth it.

"The NRCS set the standards high and it



Amy and Shane Moore host agricultural field trips throughout the year on their Washington property.

makes you do the best practice possible," said Moore.

While Moore continues to work on improving his Washington property, he said that he and his small family will continue hosting field trips on agriculture so that the next generation is more aware of conserving natural resources.

**"The NRCS set the standards high and it makes you do the best practice possible."-Shane Moore**

Moore said, "We need to make sure our kids are more aware. They will have more pressure on them than we have now to conserve."



Shane Moore has placed signs around his farm that share agricultural facts with visitors.

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