

Another Conservation Success Story...

Morgan County, Georgia

August 2009

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) helps with Dream

Charles and Karen Bradley had a dream of owning their own farm. Eleven years ago that dream became a reality.

“We have always dreamed of owning a farm. When the opportunity presented itself to buy our farm in Morgan County, it fulfilled our dream. We have now been farming for 11 years.

We started off with 15 cows, and expanded our herd to approximately 60 cows/calves, two donkeys, two horses, and two bulls,” said Charles Bradley. The farm is located on



Karen and Charles Bradley

Shakerag Road in the community of Buckhead.

The Bradley’s had some concerns that brought them to the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) after reading about the agency in an article in *Cattlemen’s* magazine.

“There was a lack of water troughs. We had to fill all troughs with water hoses - it took hours – and we needed extra cross fencing to assist with rotational grazing,” said Bradley.

“The Bradley’s came to NRCS because of an insufficient water supply for their cow/calf operation. On a daily basis, water hoses were used to supply troughs to their herd of 65 beef cattle. Due to Georgia’s extreme drought conditions during the summer months, it was difficult to keep an adequate supply of water in the troughs. Also areas where hay was being fed to

cattle were badly eroded and a high percentage of hay was lost due to trampling because of mud and muck,” said Dennis Brooks, district conservationist for the NRCS in Madison.

Brooks developed a plan to install PVC pipeline to supply the new concrete troughs with a continuous flow of water.

Brooks went on to say, “The areas around each trough would have a heavy use area installed to prevent erosion.

Due to Georgia’s extreme drought, this was the number one priority—to supply their herd with an adequate supply of water.”

Other problems that were addressed included the installation of cross fencing to help with the rotational grazing; legumes were planted to assist with their prescribed grazing system; and a well was installed to supply water for their new alternate watering system.

All of the Bradley’s problems were solved thru the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Georgia Grazing Land Conservation Coalition (GGLCC).

“EQIP will be used to address erosion and hay loss concerns around the hay wagons that are utilized during the winter months,” said Brooks.

Bradley said what he liked best about EQIP was the financial assistance and the ability to install what they needed. “With financial contribution we were finally able to install an automatic watering facility and cross fencing for rotational grazing and ease of watering cattle.”

Bradley says his operation has benefited from the



Karen Bradley filling the watering troughs before the PVC pipeline and new concrete troughs with a continuous flow was installed.

application of the conservation treatments. “The cows always have access to water; my wife’s labor is reduced (thank you), and I have more available pasture areas with cross fencing.”

“Leave the land in better shape than we found it.”— Charles Bradley

Bradley’s conservation philosophy for future generations is simple, “Leave the land in better shape than we found it,” said Bradley.

Pat Hardy, the Piedmont Soil and Water Conservation District supervisor said, “These are good folks, trying to leave their farm in better shape than they found it. They believe in being good stewards to their land by applying conservation practices.”



Karen Bradley hugging one of the new watering troughs after the PVC pipeline and new concrete troughs with a continuous flow was installed.

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