

Another Conservation Success Story...

Jackson County, Georgia

August 2011

Jefferson Family Continues Legacy of Conservation

Water quality has always been a major concern for Northeast Georgia farmer Dewey Johnson.

“We’ve been blessed with so much water. That’s good most of the time but we’ve had a tough time keeping cows out of creeks, streams and the swamp,” Johnson said.

Johnson’s family has owned hundreds of acres in Jackson County since the early 1870s and they

With the financial assistance offered through EQIP and the technical assistance provided by Boss, Johnson has been able to focus even more time and effort on protecting water quality on his land.

Exclusion fencing helps separate the 280 head of cattle from the bodies of water on the farm. This border fencing also keeps the cattle off hills that slope into a creek and streams on Johnson’s farm where erosion was a big problem.

“They helped us by designing a spring development practice to

pump water from the spring that supplied a pond with water so that it could also provide water to a watering trough. It saved us money since we didn’t have to drill a well,” Johnson added.

Cross-fencing separates pastures and helps implement a rotational grazing system. Water troughs, with heavy use area protection, have been placed around the Johnson property where livestock can drink water as part of the rotational grazing plan.

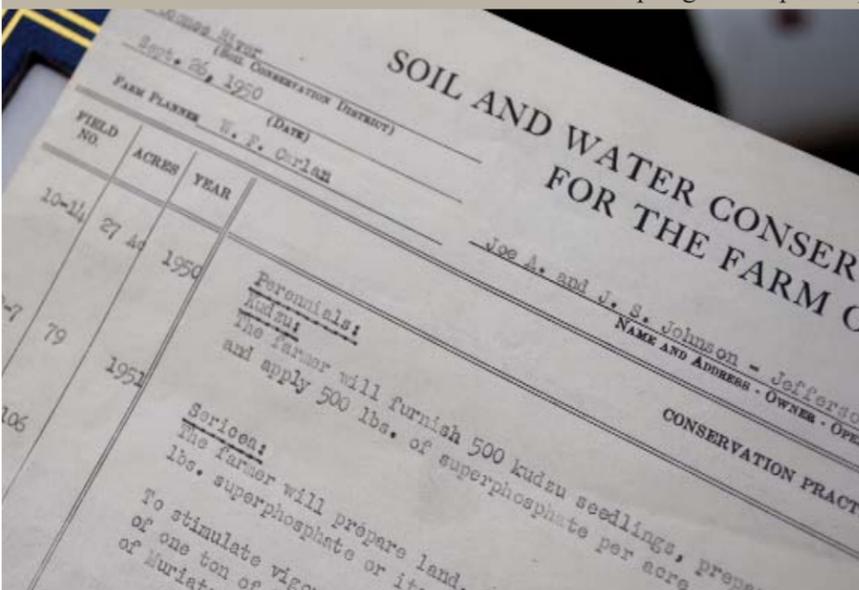
Johnson’s 23 year old son Nathan, who works on the farm with him when he isn’t on call with the Athens-Clarke County Fire Department, said that the cross-fencing has been a definite game changer.



Johnson Farm sits on more than 500 acres in Jefferson, Georgia. At any given time, there are roughly 300 head of cattle on the property.

“Getting all the fencing helps us manage them better. It’s easier to move them from pasture to pasture,” Nathan explained.

**“Just like generations before us, we try to better natural resources to help improve food production, water quality, and everything. That’s what we’re here to do,”—
Dewey Johnson**



This is a conservation practice plan dating back to the 1950s. The Johnsons have been involved in conservation for several decades.

have followed a legacy of conservation for more than a century.

Because of that continued commitment to conservation, Johnson was approved for a Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) agreement in 2010.

“Just like generations before us, we try to better natural resources to help improve food production, water quality, and everything. That’s what we’re here to do,” Johnson said.

CSP is a voluntary conservation program offered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) that encourages producers to address resource concerns in a comprehensive manner by undertaking additional conservation activities while improving, maintaining and managing existing conservation activities.

NRCS District Conservationist, Carol Boss, has worked with the Johnsons for several years and provides technical assistance when the farm family requests input from the agency. Boss said, “All the hard work they do out here makes him a great candidate for CSP.”

In addition to the CSP agreement, Johnson was recently approved for an Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) agreement.



District Conservationist Carol Boss (left), Soil Conservation Technician Jimmy Mock, Dewey Johnson (center), and his son Nathan Johnson (right).

Oconee River Resource Conservation & Development
706-769-7922

 **Natural Resources Conservation Service**
706-335-7145

Oconee River Soil And Water Conservation District

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA’s TARGET Center at 202 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.