Another Conservation Success Story...

Cook County, Georgia

August 2010

M.J. Taylor Farms Committed to Conservation

Philip Taylor has been farming for 35 years on his family owned land in Adel. Taylor's grandfather and father worked the Cook County land before him and now he carries on their legacy by continuing to make a living off the land.

"I'm grateful for the programs like EQIP that come from NRCS. Farmers like me don't always make enough to do these things on our own."-Philip Taylor

M.J. Taylor Farms grows row crops like cotton, peanuts and corn. Philip Taylor also runs roughly 500 head of heifers on the 2,000 acre property. With an operation of that size, Taylor easily noticed natural resource problems.

With the help of the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) via technical assistance provided by the local field Through the
Environmental Quality
Incentives Program (EQIP),
Taylor was able to handle
problems with soil erosion,
water quality and energy conservation on his farm.

Using a conservation tillage measure referred to as strip tilling, Taylor planted rye as a cover crop. A few weeks before it was time to plant row crops, the rye grain was sprayed and killed and only a 3-inch wide strip was tilled for the row crop to be planted.

The residue left over from the rye grains helps prevent erosion. Grass planted on the farm also helped reduce the amount of soil loss.

Taylor said this conservation tillage method has been a great help. "Well, it cuts down so much on erosion and it improves the soil. It also cuts down on fuel costs during harvesting and planting season. You don't have to make as many trips across the field," Taylor said.

To address water quality concerns, heavy

use areas were constructed around the farm for the cattle on Taylor's property. "We've put in some water troughs with concrete pads around them to help on erosion and traffic. It gets to be a big muddy mess around there."

Taylor explained that the concrete prevents manure from seeping into the ground and subsequently into the ground water. EQIP funds have also assisted with purchasing exclusion fencing that surrounds a watering drain.

Another goal was to conserve water used to irrigate the row crops like peanuts.

The center pivot irrigation system has been retrofitted and is now a low pressure system that

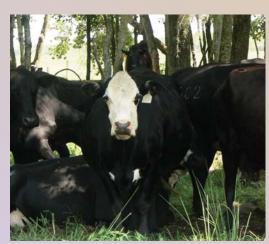
uses less water. Philip Taylor is also able to conserve more energy while using the irrigation system because it was converted from a diesel-operated motor to an electrical system.

Even though Taylor says he has plans to do even more on his farm when it comes to conserving natural resources, he can't express



Philip Taylor (left) and Soil Conservation Technician Tony Aldridge discuss different aspects of EQIP.

enough how much the NRCS has helped him already.



There are roughly 500 heifers on MJ Taylor Farms.

"I'm grateful for the programs like EQIP that come from NRCS.



Taylor cut open a cotton boll to show how far it has to go before it's ready for harvesting.

Farmers like me don't always make enough to do these things on our own. And it makes us more environmentally friendly," Taylor said.



Several row crops like peanuts, pictured above, are grown on M.J.Taylor Farms.

office in Cook County, Taylor was able to put together a plan to tackle his concerns.

Soil Conservation Technician, Tony Aldridge said, "When Mr. Taylor sees a resource concern that needs addressing, he stops to address it in a conservation-minded manner."

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Alapaha Soil And Water Conservation District

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