

Another Conservation Success Story...

Dougherty County, Georgia

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Micro-Irrigation System Helps Farmer Conserve Water

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Clinton Trice needed a change. The Albany farmer struggled over the years to keep his cattle operation in the black but Mother Nature seemed not to be on his side.

“Mother Nature is kind but sometimes she can be sort of unkind; especially when you’re not getting the water you need. We had some droughts and a few bad years with weather.

“The best part is knowing that they’re there; really being there to fill in the gaps,” —Clinton Trice

Hay became scarce. I kind of got tired of that,” Trice explained.

He decided that he would give growing pecans a chance but he soon learned that operating a pecan orchard could also be challenging. The 4th generation farmer realized that he

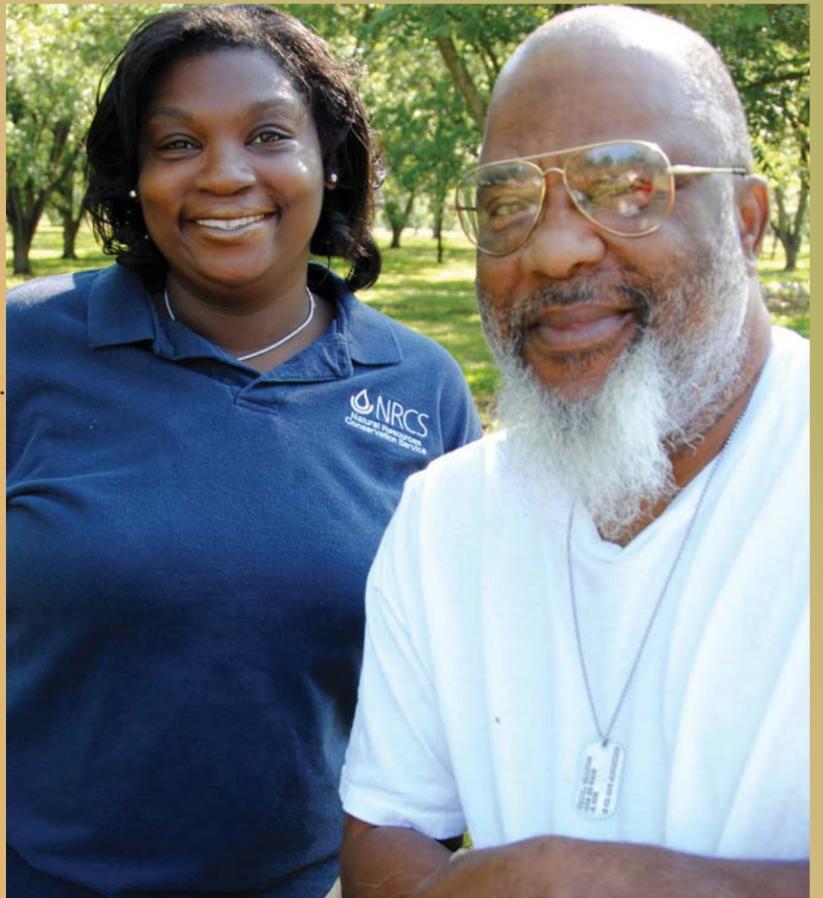
couldn’t continue to hope that water would be there when he needed it.

That’s when he decided to visit his local USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office.

“I wanted to see what programs or what benefits would work with my situation. I needed improvements with my water situation. Without water, you can’t go too far,” Trice said.

After applying for financial and technical assistance provided through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Trice was able to make improvements to his water situation after receiving a 2011 EQIP contract on more than 16 acres of pecan orchard.

As part of an Irrigation Water Management Plan, a micro-irrigation system has helped Trice keep his orchards healthy. While he appreciates the fact that he now has access to



Soil Conservationist Lashawn Brown and landowner Clinton Trice.

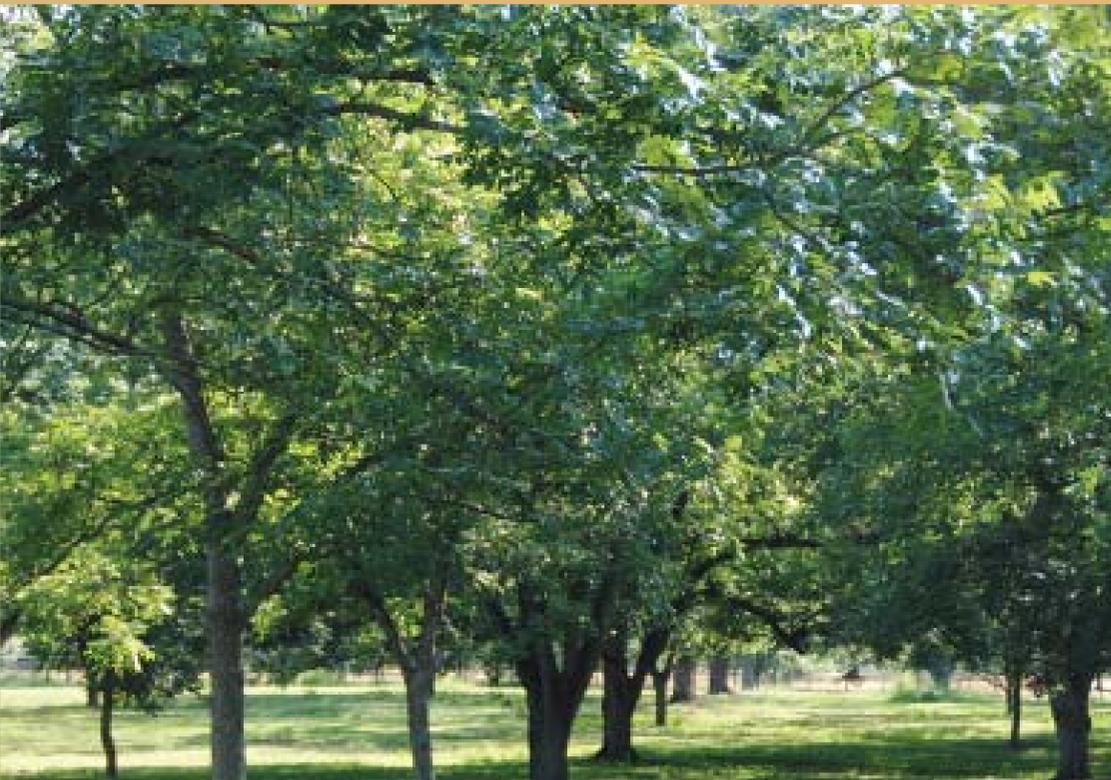
what he calls ‘timely’ water, he really appreciates the work that District Conservationist Vontice Jackson and Soil Conservationist Lashawn Brown have put into helping him complete his conservation installments.

“The best part is knowing that they’re there; really being there to fill in the gaps.” Trice added, “Vontice and Lashawn have been there when I needed them. They made me feel like any question was important. They’ve been a great help along the way.”

In addition to the 2011 EQIP contract, Trice is in the process of completing a 2012 EQIP contract that includes constructing a hoop house to extend his growing season and planting conservation cover crop. The crop used will be clover which is known to improve soil nutrition and health of pecan orchards.

While ensuring his orchards are sustainable and profitable, Trice also tries to share his conservation philosophy with future generations.

“Notice the signs of what the land is telling you and just don’t overdo it when it comes to pesticides or water. Just conserve. What we see today will matter more tomorrow,” Trice explained.



A micro-irrigation system in Clinton Trice’s pecan orchard has helped him conserve water during a dry year.

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