

Another Conservation Success Story...

Morgan County, Georgia

October 2007

Water Quality and Farm Production Improved in Morgan County

David Hilsman, a Morgan County farmer, has been farming most of his life. He got his start helping his father run a dairy operation. About 40 years ago, he started a dairy operation of his own.

Recently, Hilsman started having major concerns about his operation. He worried about the mud around his hay racks, the cows getting stuck in the pond and degrading the water quality. He wanted and needed a more efficient dairy production. As Hilsman described it, “the cows were sitting in the pond and I would have to get in my boat and fish them out. When they would go to the hay rack to eat, there would be so much mud and manure; it was a very messy situation. I needed to do something about this because things were taking effect on production.”

Hilsman had heard of USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) through word of mouth several years ago. He decided to call the Madison Service Center for help. He applied for and received cost-share assistance via the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) and Little River 319 funding and began working with the Madison NRCS to implement practices on his farm. (The 319 Program provides formula grants to the states to implement nonpoint source projects and programs in accordance with Section 319 of the Clean Water Act.)

He installed a new watering trough, a winter feeder, and fenced out the pond. Hilsman said, “the three different practices that were implemented on my farm improved the overall production of my dairy operation. There isn’t really anything I can complain about because everything I needed to get done was finished and my dairy operation has improved.” He added, “the cows sure do love the trough. I think they even love it more than me. The winter feeder is one of the best things I could have built. It helps me a lot on production.”

“Besides the most important thing (cost share assistance),” said Hilsman “I appreciated the improvements that were made on my farm and enjoyed working with the Madison Service Center NRCS conservationists, who developed an excellent conservation plan with me and helped me implement the plan on my farm.”



Hilsman stands next to the fenced out pond. This fence will help improve water quality in Morgan County.



Hilsman stands next to his new trough.



Hilsman stands in front of the winter feeder. Hilsman said the cows come here before they stand under the trees.

Oconee River RC&D
706-769-7922

 **NRCS** Natural Resources
Conservation Service
706-342-1315

Piedmont Soil And Water
Conservation District

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