

Another Conservation Success Story...

Franklin County, Georgia

February 2007

Chan Cabe had always wanted to return to his farming roots so when he married Lou, who had been raised on a farm, it was an ideal match.

Like most families these days, the Cabe family is a two-career family. Chan works as an insurance agent and Lou runs the day-to-day farming operation.

The Cabes started their farm operation about 20 years ago when their first son was “on the way.” When you’ve got another generation following you, you start thinking about whether the generations before you left you in

hill where old terraces had once kept the top-soil in place. None of the waterways were fenced. “We pretty much started from scratch,” Lou said.

The Cabes heard about conservation practices from Fred Dilbeck, a retired NRCS employee who used to work in the same building as Chan. “I read a lot of farm publications, too” Chan added.

“We knew we had a problem—especially with soil erosion in our waterways. We had started some things—had fenced out all waterways and created watering ramps,” Chan said.

“We started (conservation) because we felt it was the right thing to do—then we found out there was assistance available plus an advisory process comes with it.” he added.

“Conservation is one of those things you know about and you’ve just got to go to the trouble to do it,” Lou said.

Slowly, the Cabes have built their farm up to

250 acres and lease an additional 400 acres.

With the assistance of NRCS District Conservationist Forrest Ferguson, and now Soil Conservationist Staci Henry, the Cabes have spent 20 years improving their land. They have installed watering facilities which are protected by heavy use areas so cattle will not create

unstable areas around watering areas.

The watering facilities are strategically placed out in the open so that cattle will not linger for long periods of time which would create eroded areas.

Rotating the cattle from paddock to paddock allows the grass to regenerate itself and keeps the environment—and the cattle healthier.

They constructed a waste storage facility on an old poultry



Lou Cabe cradles a 3-week old Boer goat.

house pad therefore requiring a limited amount of grading.

This facility allows for a safe way to store litter until it can be applied to the land according to the nutrient management plan.

In addition to the waste facility, a composting facility was also constructed so mortality

from their poultry operation can be composted and disposed of in a proper manner.

“We had goals that were the same as NRCS goals. We were

able to work together and get them accomplished. I like the local personnel—the technical assistance and the financial assistance. We try to promote agriculture and stewardship—host 3rd graders—400 to 500 of them—annually in

“When you’ve got another generation following you, you start thinking about whether the generations before you left you in great shape or in a hole.”—Lou Cabe



A stackhouse and poultry composter help protect the environment and provide nutrient for the land when it is needed.

great shape or in a hole,” Lou said. They purchased 40 acres of land that used to be farmed by Chan’s grandfather. Like many family farms, the land had been divided and sold off into several different parcels—each which had been managed differently. The land lacked nutrients and a comprehensive management approach that not only made the farm productive but maintained and improved the health of the land. Soil had eroded for years down the



Providing an additional water supply helps keep the livestock hydrated and protects the environment.



The use of fencing allows controlled access to the water supply thereby improving water quality.

May,” said Chan.

We take a lot of pride in sharing—we feel like it’s our responsibility and privilege to teach children to appreciate food and fiber,” Lou said.

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