

Another Conservation Success Story...

Terrell County, Georgia

June 2011

Dawson Couple Gets Much Needed Irrigation System Through EQIP

John and Julia Canty moved to Terrell County less than five years ago, but in that short time the couple have grown a small garden into a half-acre operation in their backyard.

When John Canty isn't traveling the country on his big rig, he and his wife dedicate much of their free time to farming.

Canty grows a variety of produce that includes collards, okra, peas, tomatoes, squash, watermelon and zucchini.

Even though it may seem like a small accomplishment, Canty still gets excited when he sees a small seed sprout.

"You really have to really want to do this. You can't be in too big a hurry when you're farming. It takes patience," Canty explained.

through an Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) contract, the Cantys have been able to dig a well and install a solid set irrigation system in their vegetable and fruit plots.

"We can get water to it now. Before, we'd have to drag a hose and get stuck out there. It was like a handicap. EQIP has been a big help," John Canty said.

When asked what he likes

best about EQIP, John said that District Conservationist Rich Hosmer and Soil Conservation Technician Melissa Golden were always willing to help.

"They believe in helping you whenever they can," Canty said.

Hosmer and Golden said that while it's their job to help landowners whenever they can, the Cantys have made it an enjoyable process.

"The Cantys are really good to work with. Even though he has a limited amount of land, Mr. John is real conservation minded with what he has. He wants to do what's best for the land," Hosmer said.

And, now that the couple, who have been married 42 years, has a steady supply of water to help them grow their farm, they will have an easier

time of doing what they say is best for the land.

Canty also wanted to let other small or beginning farmers in Georgia know that whatever their issue may be, don't hesitate



Julia Canty harvests pears grown in their backyard to make delicious pear preserves each year.



This small irrigation system was installed with the help of EQIP funds.

to seek assistance. "If there is something to do, you have fine people here to help you. Don't be afraid to ask," Canty said.

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Terrell County is a designated StrikeForce county in Georgia. The USDA StrikeForce Initiative is designed to help relieve persistent poverty in high-poverty counties.



Julia and John Canty have been farming for years. So, when the couple moved to Dawson it was only natural that they'd continue their passion.

At times, it has been a tough job especially without a steady supply of water.

Through the technical assistance provided by the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the funding provided



The Cantys grow collards (pictured), bell peppers, sweet potatoes, and watermelon.

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Lower Chattahoochee River Soil And Water Conservation District

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