



United States Department of Agriculture

# Louisiana's Conservation Update

Natural Resources Conservation Service

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September 2013

## Poultry Producer Tames the Hills of Lincoln Parish

### Stories from the Field

**NRCS Helps Acadia Parish Cattle Producer Achieve Farm Goals**

**Wisconsin and Pennsylvania Dairymen Start Dairy in North Louisiana**

A cooperative partnership with local Soil and Water Conservation Districts and Resource Conservation and Development Councils (RC&D)

Projects · Successes · Partnerships



The Conservation Update is distributed monthly by mail and e-mail.

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Angie Tyler began working with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) in 2003. Since then, she has become a spokesperson for conservation and a certified Louisiana Master Farmer. To find out more about Angie Tyler and her farm, see pages 4 and 5.

## Visit Angie Tyler's farm with your smartphone



This is a QR Code. Download a free QR Code reader for your smartphone, then use your phone's camera to read the QR Code. Scanning this QR Code will take you to a video featuring Angie Tyler.

Or go to . . .  
[http://nrclsouthern.usda.gov/Conservation/Angie-Tyler-Poultry-Producer/32072294\\_QRGKhn#li=2787876370&k=RvNs6fd](http://nrclsouthern.usda.gov/Conservation/Angie-Tyler-Poultry-Producer/32072294_QRGKhn#li=2787876370&k=RvNs6fd)  
to view the video.

Follow us on YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/LouisianaNRCS>

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## Notes from the State Conservationist



In 1972, Congress enacted the Clean Water Act to improve our nation's waterways. In 1998 the President's Clean Water Plan identified contaminated runoff as the nation's most important source of water pollution. Today, regulators are taking a closer look at point source pollution from animal waste, and if this problem is not addressed by producers, regulations and permitting may follow.

To stay ahead of the regulators—and to make sure they are complying with Clean Water Act mandates—poultry producers are voluntarily working with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to develop Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans and Conservation Plans that incorporate conservation practices to reduce soil erosion,

address litter disposal, and improve water quality. These plans help poultry farmers assess their risks and reduce liability by documenting steps taken to reduce any threat; improve efficiency of their operations by improving record keeping; and comply with rules and regulations regarding animal waste and water quality.

If you are a poultry producer and you are interested in developing a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan and a Conservation Plan for your farm, contact your local NRCS office. We will work with you to identify resource concerns, identify conservation practices to address your resource concerns, develop a plan, and ensure your conservation systems meet all current and potential regulations.

Sarah Haymaker  
State Conservationist  
Louisiana



State Conservationist Kevin Norton is on detail assignment to Washington, DC, to work on Senator Debbie Stabenow's staff to help draft the language of our nation's next Farm Bill. Sarah Haymaker is serving as State Conservationist until Kevin Norton's return.

A directory of our offices is included on the last page of this publication.



## Louisiana *Ag Facts*

- **Poultry production is the largest animal agricultural industry in Louisiana** and is second only to forestry in total income production for all agricultural commodities.
- **In 2010, 899.3 million pounds of broiler meat were produced in Louisiana.**
- **The gross farm value of these broilers was \$735.8 million in 2010.**
- **There were 284 commercial broiler producers in 2010.**
- **Commercial broilers are produced in 11 parishes** including Bienville, Claiborne, Jackson, Lincoln, Natchitoches, Ouachita, Sabine, Union, Vernon, Webster, and Winn.

LSU AgCenter, LSUAgCenter.com, [http://www.lsuagcenter.com/en/crops\\_livestock/livestock/poultry/Louisianas-Commercial-Poultry-Industry.htm](http://www.lsuagcenter.com/en/crops_livestock/livestock/poultry/Louisianas-Commercial-Poultry-Industry.htm)



## Reduced Soil Erosion and Improved Water Quality

# Poultry Producer Tames the Hills of Lincoln Parish

**“Getting the farm to look like it does today was a pretty big challenge, but it was a labor of love,”** says Angie Tyler, Lincoln Parish poultry producer. “NRCS really helped me make my vision a reality.”

Tyler began working with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service’s (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) in 2003 on various conservation projects. Most recently, in October of 2012, Tyler needed help repairing a large area of gully erosion on her farm, and also help with preventing the land from eroding further. Tyler has always battled problems with erosion, primarily due to the hilly terrain of north Louisiana. Ninety-five percent of the rainwater she receives on her farm was running off into a concentrated area behind the chicken houses causing a huge gully to form.

“I knew the gully was going to be costly to fix, and I didn’t have the funds to do so. NRCS was really our only route,” said Tyler.

NRCS surveyed the area of Tyler’s land where the erosion had occurred and developed a plan to install a grade stabilization structure, which would cause the water to flow into a singular large pipe. The water would then flow from the pipe to an area of land with a more stable elevation, diverting the water from the troublesome spot.

Tyler also planted a grassed waterway to help slow down the water as it flowed over the new area. Grass or permanent vegetation established in waterways protects the soil from concentrated flows. The grassed waterway also helps improve the quality of water leaving the farm by trapping sediment and nutrients.

Tyler is really happy with the work done on her poultry farm. She says, “The erosion problem we were having is now completely solved thanks to NRCS.”

Angie Tyler is certain that for conservation to thrive, the message needs to be shared. She promotes good conservation through her words at conferences and meetings with other farmers—and through actions on her farm as a certified Louisiana Master Farmer.

“The Master Farmer Program not only taught me the importance of good practices and record keeping, but it also provided a place for me to meet other farmers who were just as passionate about conservation,” said Tyler.

The Master Farmer Program is a three phase program beginning with a classroom session and visit to a model farm, and concluding with implementation of a comprehensive conservation plan.

# “Conservation is ongoing, it’s never finished. We can always find new ways to better the land.”

Angie Tyler



Conservation practices:

Conveying water



Diverting water



Distributing water



Cleaning water



According to Angie Tyler, there are other natural resource concerns she would like to address on her farm. She says that future conservation planning and working with NRCS to implement conservation practices is a good investment for her poultry operation.

For more information about conservation planning and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, contact an NRCS office near you.

Angie Tyler  
Conservationist

# Around the State

**Aug 26**

**Denham Springs Field Office, Soil Survey and Water Resources Office Move:** The Denham Springs Field Office, Soil Survey Office, and Water Resources moved to a new location on August 26th. The new building is located at 907 Florida Boulevard in Denham Springs, Louisiana. Please visit them at their new location or call them at (225) 665-4253, extension 3, for all of your conservation needs.

**Sep 13**

**Bogue Chitto-Pearl River Vegetative Planting Project:** On Friday, September 13, 2013, 25 volunteers from Sumner High School's FFA Club worked with the Bogue Chitto-Pearl River Soil and Water Conservation District on their annual coastal vegetative planting project. This year's project consisted of planting 600 four-inch pots of bitter panicum and 1200 cords of smooth cordgrass along 9,000 linear feet of shoreline along Lake Pontchartrain at Fontainebleau State Park.

## NRCS Helps Acadia Parish Cattle Producer Achieve Farm Goals

Vernon Fuselier raises cattle and rice in Acadia Parish near Eunice, Louisiana. Mr. Fuselier came to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to find out how he could improve grazing distribution on his farm so he could increase his herd size. His goals included improving water availability for his cattle, reducing invasive species (Chinese tallow trees), and reducing gully erosion.

With these goals in mind, NRCS worked with Mr. Fuselier to develop a progressive conservation plan. Conservation practices outlined in the plan include: installation of watering facilities, pipeline, and heavy use area protection pads; brush management to reduce invasive species; and installation of a grade

stabilization structure to control gully erosion.

During fiscal year 2013, Mr. Fuselier began implementing his plan through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). He installed three heavy use area protection pads, 2,690 feet of pipeline, and three watering facilities on 106 acres of his farm. During 2014, he plans to implement the same conservation practices on an additional 62 acres, as well as possibly adding cross fencing to his pastures.

Submitted by: Jack Haller, District Conservationist, Crowley Field Office



## Stories from the Field

**Aug 30**

**Women in Agriculture Conference:** The Acadiana RC&D and NRCS hosted a "Women in Agriculture" Conference at the LSU AgCenter in Crowley, Louisiana, on August 30, 2013. A variety of topics were covered, including estate planning, international marketing, Annie's Project, Louisiana MarketMaker, soil health, and disaster preparations for farm animals.



### Wisconsin and Pennsylvania Dairymen Start Dairy in North Louisiana

In 2002, Charles Opitz from Wisconsin purchased approximately 930 acres of cropland in Baskin, Louisiana, with the vision of starting a grass-fed dairy. One might ask, “Why would a well-known and successful Wisconsin dairyman come to north Louisiana to start a dairy?” The answer is simple—land in the “dairy belt” in the northern part of the nation was hard to come by, and prices were through the roof; winters were harsh; grass availability, although high in quality, was limited to a short growing season; and water was not as available as it is in Louisiana.

While starting his enterprise, Opitz worked with the Northeast Soil and Water Conservation District and the Winnsboro NRCS Field Office to convert his cropland into pasture. NRCS helped him establish a forage base of Bermuda and fescue and assisted with the design and installation of underground pipelines to facilitate water for the dairy cows and rock pads for the water troughs. During this time, Opitz and Ted Miller, a beginning dairyman in Pennsylvania, met at a Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative (GLCI) National Convention in St. Louis. Miller was facing the fact that his operation in Pennsylvania needed more room to grow. With the high price of land in his area, he decided to join Opitz in Louisiana for a new venture.

While north Louisiana poses many challenges for dairy production, it also has advantages. One of the many challenges they face is forage quality. Although forages are available for a longer period of time in north Louisiana, the quality of these forages is less than the cool season perennials of the northern United States. To combat this, Miller and Opitz worked with the Winnsboro Field Office to establish warm season perennials such as Bermudagrass, and cool season perennials such as fescue. Although fescue is not widely used in Louisiana, north Louisiana’s climate allows fescue to grow and produce high quality perennial winter forage. This allows the dairy operation to have, in theory, a 10-month grazing period.

One of the biggest challenges with dairy production in the southern half of the nation is the summer heat. Miller utilizes the water availability of north Louisiana to irrigate his forages and cool his cattle. Two center pivots are in operation on the 850-acre pasture. These center pivots irrigate, fertilize, and are used as a tool

to facilitate rotational grazing by producing a mist of water for the cattle to cool themselves. NRCS helped install over 15,000 feet of livestock water lines on the farm and over 60 heavy use areas under water troughs.

Miller explains that, “NRCS has helped us tremendously. The vision and goals of NRCS fit directly in line with our objective.” Miller further explained that, “Because of the massive scale of work that needed to be performed, NRCS’ cost-assistance helped us boost our business forward without long-term debt.”

Opitz’s vision of a grass fed-dairy in north Louisiana is a work-in-progress. This year, NRCS helped establish sprigged Russell Bermuda on 120 acres of cropland, install over 9,300 feet of livestock water lines, and plant 55 acres of fescue that will be grazed this fall.

Submitted by: Kody Meaux, Soil Conservationist, Winnsboro Field Office





# Contact Our Offices

Visit our web site at:  
[www.la.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.la.nrcs.usda.gov)

Parish	Field Office	Soil and Water Conservation District	Address	Telephone
Acadia	Crowley	Acadia SWCD	157 Cherokee Drive, Suite C, Crowley, LA 70526	(337) 783-5823, ext. 3
Allen	Oberlin	Allen SWCD	309 North 1st Street, Suite 1, Oberlin, LA 70655	(337) 639-4850, ext. 3
Ascension	Donaldsonville	Lower Delta SWCD and New River SWCD	2438 Highway 1 South, Donaldsonville, LA 70346	(225) 473-7638, ext. 3
Assumption	Donaldsonville	Lower Delta SWCD	2438 Highway 1 South, Donaldsonville, LA 70346	(225) 473-7638, ext. 3
Avoyelles	Marksville	Avoyelles SWCD	629 Tunica Drive West, Marksville, LA 71351	(318) 253-9445, ext. 3
Beauregard	DeRidder	Calcasieu SWCD	597 Mahlon Street, Suite B, DeRidder, LA 70634	(337) 463-8555, ext. 3
Bienville	Minden	Saline SWCD	216B Broadway, Minden, LA 71055	(318) 377-3950, ext. 3
Bossier	Benton	Bodcau SWCD	200 Burt Boulevard, Suite 101, Benton, LA 71006-4901	(318) 965-2185, ext. 3
Caddo	Shreveport	Caddo SWCD	1402 Hawn Avenue, Shreveport, LA 71107	(318) 676-3461, ext. 3
Calcasieu	Lake Charles	Gulf Coast SWCD	5417 Gerstner Memorial Drive, Lake Charles, LA 70601	(337) 474-1583, ext. 3
Caldwell	Columbia	Boeuf and Dugdemona SWCD	7128 Highway 165 South, Suite 2, Columbia, LA 71418	(318) 649-2651, ext. 3
Cameron	Lake Charles	Gulf Coast SWCD	5417 Gerstner Memorial Drive, Lake Charles, LA 70601	(337) 474-1583, ext. 3
Catahoula	Jonesville	Catahoula SWCD	3545 4th Street, Jonesville, LA 71343	(318) 339-4239, ext. 3
Claiborne	Minden	D'Arbonne SWCD	216B Broadway, Minden, LA 71055	(318) 377-3950, ext. 3
Concordia	Ferriday	Tensas-Concordia SWCD	8331 Highway 84, Ferriday, LA 71334	(318) 757-2455, ext. 3
DeSoto	Mansfield	DeSoto SWCD	211 Washington Avenue, Mansfield, LA 71052	(318) 872-4949, ext. 3
East Baton Rouge	Denham Springs	Capital SWCD	907 Florida Boulevard, Denham Springs, LA 70726	(225) 664-1430, ext. 3
East Carroll	Lake Providence	East Carroll SWCD	406 Lake Street, Suite C, Lake Providence, LA 71254	(318) 559-2604, ext. 3
East Feliciana	Clinton	Feliciana SWCD	9752 Plank Road South, Clinton, LA 70722	(225) 683-5496, ext. 3
Evangeline	Ville Platte	Evangeline SWCD	205 Court Street, Ville Platte, LA 70586	(337) 363-6602, ext. 3
Franklin	Winnsboro	Northeast SWCD	616 Riser Road, Winnsboro, LA 71295	(318) 435-6743, ext. 3
Grant	Colfax	Grant SWCD	510 Main Street, Colfax, LA 71417	(318) 627-9903, ext. 3
Iberia	New Iberia	Iberia SWCD	2617 Northside Road, Suite 600, New Iberia, LA 70563	(337) 369-6623, ext. 3
Iberville	Addis	Lower Delta SWCD	7747 Highway 1 South, Addis, LA 70710	(225) 687-2184, ext. 3
Jackson	Ruston	Dugdemona SWCD	1412 Celebrity Drive, Ruston, LA 71270	(318) 255-3136, ext. 3
Jefferson	New Orleans	Crescent SWCD	1041 Rue La Cannes, Luling, LA 70070	(985) 331-9084
Jefferson Davis	Jennings	Jefferson Davis SWCD	2003 Port Drive, Jennings, LA 70546	(337) 824-0975, ext. 3
Lafayette	Lafayette	Lafayette SWCD	905 Jefferson Street, Suite 310, Lafayette, LA 70501-7913	(337) 262-6601, ext. 3
Lafourche	Thibodaux	Lafourche-Terrebonne SWCD	143 Laura Drive, Thibodaux, LA 70301	(985) 447-3871, ext. 3
LaSalle	Jonesville	LaSalle SWCD	3545 4th Street, Jonesville, LA 71343	(318) 339-4239, ext. 3
Lincoln	Ruston	D'Arbonne SWCD	1412 Celebrity Drive, Ruston, LA 71270	(318) 255-3136, ext. 3
Livingston	Denham Springs	Capital SWCD	907 Florida Boulevard, Denham Springs, LA 70726	(225) 664-1430, ext. 3
Madison	Tallulah	Madison SWCD	1900 Crothers Drive, Tallulah, LA 71282	(318) 574-4158, ext. 3
Morehouse	Bastrop	Morehouse SWCD	9604 Marlatt Street, Bastrop, LA 71220	(318) 283-7626, ext. 3
Natchitoches	Natchitoches	Natchitoches SWCD	6949 Louisiana Highway 1 Bypass, Natchitoches, LA 71457	(318) 357-8366, ext. 3
Orleans	New Orleans	Crescent SWCD	1041 Rue La Cannes, Luling, LA 70070	(985) 331-9084
Quachita	Monroe	D'Arbonne/Boeuf River SWCD	2410 Old Sterling Road, Suite B, Monroe, LA 71203-2668	(318) 343-4467, ext. 3
Plaquemines	New Orleans	Plaquemines SWCD	1041 Rue La Cannes, Luling, LA 70070	(985) 331-9084
Pointe Coupee	New Roads	Upper Delta SWCD	180 East Main Street, New Roads, LA 70760	(225) 638-7746, ext. 3
Rapides	Alexandria	Rapides SWCD	3734 Government Street, Building C, Alexandria, LA 71303	(318) 473-7856, ext. 3
Red River	Coushatta	Red River SWCD	1311 Ringgold Avenue, Coushatta, LA 71019	(318) 932-4352, ext. 3
Richland	Rayville	Boeuf River SWCD	141 Industrial Loop, Rayville, LA 71269	(318) 728-4451, ext. 3
Sabine	Many	Sabine SWCD	570 Highway 171 By Pass, Many, LA 71449	(318) 256-3491
St. Bernard	New Orleans	Crescent SWCD	1041 Rue La Cannes, Luling, LA 70070	(985) 331-9084
St. Charles	New Orleans	Crescent SWCD	1041 Rue La Cannes, Luling, LA 70070	(985) 331-9084
St. Helena	Amite	Tangipahoa-St. Helena SWCD	805 West Oak Street, Suite 1, Amite, LA 70422-2820	(985) 748-8751, ext. 3
St. James	Donaldsonville	Lower Delta SWCD and New River SWCD	2438 Highway 1 South, Donaldsonville, LA 70346	(225) 473-7638, ext. 3
St. John	New Orleans	Crescent SWCD	1041 Rue La Cannes, Luling, LA 70070	(985) 331-9084
St. Landry	Opelousas	St. Landry SWCD	5832 I-49 North Service Road, Opelousas, LA 70570	(337) 942-2530, ext. 3
St. Martin	Lafayette	St. Martin SWCD	905 Jefferson Street, Suite 310, Lafayette, LA 70501-7913	(337) 262-6601, ext. 3
St. Mary	Franklin	St. Mary SWCD	500 Main Street, Franklin, LA 70538	(337) 828-1461, ext. 3
St. Tammany	Franklinton	Bogue Chitto-Pearl River SWCD	1111 Washington Street, Franklinton, LA 70438	(985) 839-5688, ext. 3
Tangipahoa	Amite	Tangipahoa-St. Helena SWCD	805 West Oak Street, Suite 1, Amite, LA 70422-2820	(985) 748-8751, ext. 3
Tensas	St. Joseph	Tensas-Concordia SWCD	1223 Plank Road, St. Joseph, LA 71366	(318) 766-3502, ext. 3
Terrebonne	Thibodaux	Lafourche-Terrebonne SWCD	143 Laura Drive, Thibodaux, LA 70301	(985) 447-3871, ext. 3
Union	Farmerville	D'Arbonne SWCD	501 Glory Road, Farmerville, LA 71241	(318) 368-8021
Vermilion	Abbeville	Vermilion SWCD	3221 Veterans Memorial Drive, Suite H, Abbeville, LA 70510	(337) 893-5664, ext. 3
Vernon	Leesville	Calcasieu SWCD	205 North 5th Street, Leesville, LA 71446	(337) 239-2193
Washington	Franklinton	Bogue Chitto-Pearl River SWCD	1111 Washington Street, Franklinton, LA 70438	(985) 839-5688, ext. 3
Webster	Minden	Dorcheat SWCD	216B Broadway, Minden, LA 71055	(318) 377-3950, ext. 3
West Baton Rouge	Addis	Upper Delta SWCD	7747 Highway 1, South, Addis, LA 70710	(225) 687-2184, ext. 3
West Carroll	Oak Grove	West Carroll SWCD	208 South Constitution Street, Oak Grove, LA 71263	(318) 428-9303, ext. 3
West Feliciana	Clinton	Feliciana SWCD	9752 Plank Road South, Clinton, LA 70722	(225) 683-5496, ext. 3
Winn	Natchitoches	Dugdemona SWCD	6949 Louisiana Highway 1 Bypass, Natchitoches, LA 71457	(318) 357-8366, ext. 3

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