

CARES Recipient Profile



2015 CARES Recipient

Farm: Treeair Cattle Co.

Location: Wauchula, Florida

Date of Origination: 2006

Commodities: beef cattle, citrus

Steve Johnson is a 4TH generation producer who owns and operates Treeair Cattle Co as well as Johnson Harvesting, Inc. in both Hardee and Manatee Counties.



Johnson grows several varieties of citrus spanning more than 600 acres. Treeair Cattle Co. started out as a hobby business for Johnson and his father and together they have grown their herd to more than 800 beef cattle. Johnson's children and his wife, Andrea, play an integral role in the family business helping manage the office and spending time with Dad at work.

"I love that I have the opportunity to take my children to work with me on any given day. I also feel confident that I can pass down to my children, which will be the fifth generation of Johnson's in agriculture, a set of thriving businesses that complement each other. And that I know my children are excited about," stated Johnson.

By implementing Best Management Practices (BMPs), he is able to improve water quality and water conservation throughout each of his properties. BMPs are practical, cost-effective actions that agricultural producers take to conserve water and reduce the amount of pesticides, fertilizers, animal waste and other impurities that impact our water resources.

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Johnson said, “environmental stewardship is very important to what I do every single day. My land will not return anything to me if I do not take care of it. I use BMPs to improve water quality and reduce water use just as my dad and his father did before me.”

Some of the BMPs he has implemented in his citrus groves include surface water withdrawals and soil moisture monitoring so that irrigation devices can deliver water only where and when it is needed. The on-site weather station also assists with delivering real-time data in relation to soil moisture. Soil and leaf analyses are two BMPs that help Johnson understand nutrient requirements so that he can apply the right type and amount of fertilizers lessening the risk of leaching or over-fertilization. For his beef cattle operation, Johnson utilizes rotational grazing and re-planting with native species to provide optimum re-growth on areas where cattle are raised.

Johnson stated, “what I do affects not just my family and I, but millions of people. To know that my citrus and beef products have positively impacted multiple lives and families and that I do my part to protect our environment is an amazing feeling.”