

CARES Recipient Profile



THIS FARM
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Farm: Gwinn Brothers Farm

Location: McAlpin, Suwannee County

Date of Origination: 1982

Commodities: Watermelons, cattle, peanuts, iron clay peas, bahiagrass seed and hay



Donell and Robert Gwinn have been farming together at Gwinn Brothers Farm near McAlpin for over 25 years. They have a rich farming heritage in Suwannee County and are well known and respected throughout Florida and South Georgia, not just for their expertise in farming but also for their conservation efforts.

On their 1,137-acre farm the Gwinns produce peanuts, iron clay peas, bahiagrass seed, hay, and beef cattle, but they are best known for their premium watermelons, which are sold locally and throughout the eastern United States. During watermelon season the brothers operate a packinghouse in McAlpin, where they employ local workers.

The Gwinns are leaders in the implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) and generously share their knowledge and experience with neighboring growers. The brothers are presently participating in a Row Crop BMP farm demonstration project sponsored by the University of Florida/Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF-IFAS), and they have participated in many similar educational outreach efforts in the past.

Gwinn Brothers Farm is a model for environmental stewardship. By following a conservation plan developed by the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the Gwinns have succeeded in conserving precious topsoil and improving water quality, plant and animal health and wildlife habitat. Conservation measures implemented on the farm include herbaceous wind barriers, cover crops, conservation crop rotation, prescribed grazing, nutrient management, pest management, irrigation water management and upland wildlife habitat management.

Donell and Robert Gwinn are both conservation and industry leaders. They were recently recognized by the Suwannee County Conservation District as Conservation Farmers of the Year. Donell Gwinn served as a district supervisor for the Suwannee County Conservation District and is presently serving as an adviser to the Suwannee County Farm Service Agency County Operating Committee.

Source: FreshFromFlorida.com – 2007