

CARES Recipient Profile



Farm: Florida Blue Farms, Inc.
Location: Waldo, Alachua County
Date of Origination: 2010
Commodities: Southern Highbush Blueberries

Brittany H. Lee is the Vice- President and Farm Manager of [Florida Blue Farms, Inc.](#) in Waldo, Florida. The farm was started by Dennis & Carrie Lee and their children Brittany Lee, Adam Lee and Prentiss Ladkani. In 2010, Lee and her family converted their 50- acres silviculture tract into a blueberry operation. As they have grown their farm, Florida Blue Farms, Inc. now produces Southern Highbush blueberries on 90 acres.

As part of their dedication to maintain and improve water quality, Florida Blue Farms, Inc. has implemented the Florida Specialty Fruit and Nut Crop Operations Best Management Practices (BMPs) since 2008. Their water conservation plan is multi-faceted; which includes weather stations for accurate on-site weather conditions, drip irrigation and ground cover which reduces irrigation needs and inputs, soil moisture monitoring, plant tissue and root growth monitoring & testing to aid in nutrient and herbicide application decisions, and most significantly they have specially designed and engineered the drainage system in accordance with BMPs and conservation guidelines. The drainage system ultimately collects into a 2-acre tailwater recovery pond. During frost protection events the pond enables them to significantly reduce frost/freeze irrigation runoff and recycle up to 70% of the withdrawals applied to the receiving watershed. Lee's goal is that they have a 50% overall long- term farm aquifer reduction goal at build- out.

CARES is proud to share that Lee is a 2017 recipient of the Commissioner's Agricultural-Environmental Leadership Award. This program spotlights the environmentally innovative farming practices of the state's growers and ranchers. Nominees for the award come from different parts of Florida's agricultural industry, but they all share a commitment to protect and preserve Florida's resources while continuing to provide agricultural products for society. To read more about Lee's recognition, please [click here](#).

When asked why she is farmer who CARES, Lee responded, "As agriculturalists, we are charged with being good stewards. It is the right thing to do. Conservation and preservation are important components of protecting the environment. We have taken great measures on our farm to make water quality our number one priority. Through our Surface Water Management plan, we believe that when water it leave our farm the water quality is better than when it came onto our farm."

