

# CARES Recipient Profile



**Farm:** E.W. Simmons Farms Inc.

**Location:** Hillsborough County

**Date of Origination:** 1925

**Commodities:** Strawberries and Blueberries

E.W. Simmons Farms started in 1925 when Earl Simmons Sr. bought the original farm and began growing strawberries, citrus, and several varieties of vegetables. As time passed, and trends in strawberry production



changed, the family shifted its focus to citrus and vegetable production, but in 1977, Billy Simmons returned to the farm and grew their first crop of strawberries on 12 acres. Today, under the management of Mr. Simmons, E.W. Simmons Farms invest in research and development to optimize their production of strawberries and blueberries.

In business for 90 years, E.W. Simmons Farms has always believed in safeguarding its natural resources for future generations. They have implemented Best Management Practices (BMPs) that help eliminate or reduce potential contamination to their land and water. BMPs are practical, cost-effective actions that agricultural producers can take to reduce the amount of pollutants entering our water resources, while also conserving water supplies. These BMPs include implementing rye grass water ways and ground cover to prevent soil erosion, drip irrigation for fertilization and controlled delivery, tensiometers to measure soil moisture, and GPS guided equipment that increases efficiency and effectiveness.

In the community, Mr. Simmons is a member of the First Baptist Church of Plant City where he serves in the nursery. He also serves as a volunteer for a multitude of community events and helps with the information booth at the Strawberry Festival.

When asked why he is a farmer who CARES, Mr. Simmons responded, "I want to do my part to preserve these irreplaceable riches."