

CARES Recipient Profile



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2017 CARES Recipient

Farm: Sand Hill Blueberries

Location: Eustis, Florida

Date of Origination: 1982

Commodities: Blueberries



Melanie Rose is the owner of a family blueberry operation that has been farming in Florida since 1982. After growing ferns and pittosporum for many years Rose opened Sand Hill Blueberries, a commercial u-pick operation totaling over 8,000 plants and 5 different varieties of blueberries.



Best Management Practices (BMPs) have guided her farm's water conservation plan from day one and she works regularly with the Lake Soil and Water Conservation District's Mobile Irrigation Lab to ensure her farm maintains and improves water quality on and around the property. Agricultural Best Management Practices (BMPs) are practical, cost-effective actions that agricultural producers can take to conserve water and reduce the amount of

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pesticides, fertilizers, animal waste and other pollutants entering our water resources. The Mobile Irrigation Lab is well known for improving water management programs on farms and in Lake County alone, the Mobile Irrigation Lab helps save 347 million gallons of water each year.

Through their recommendations, Mrs. Rose has installed drip irrigation ensuring water and fertilizer are delivered exactly where and when they are needed. The farm also features raised beds to improve soil health and regular plant tissue and soil samples are taken to determine nutrient and herbicide applications on the farm.

Florida Farm Bureau is proud to recognize Mrs. Melanie Rose of Sand Hill Blueberries with a 2017 CARES Award for her commitment to environmental stewardship and dedication to involving herself in opportunities to educate other farmers and the general public about how hard farmers work to preserve and protect our natural resources. Be sure to check out her [Facebook page \(@SandHillBlueberries\)](#) for hours of operation and to learn more about her outstanding BMP Program!