

CARES Recipient Profile



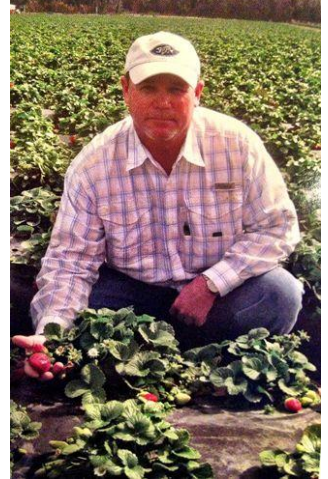
THIS FARM
CARES

Farm: Mathis Farms

Location: Plant City, Hillsborough County

Date of Origination: 1985

Commodities: Strawberries



Steve Mathis, owner and farm manager of Mathis Farms began farming strawberries during high school and bought his first 10 acre farm in 1985. Today, Mr. Mathis has over 100 acres of strawberries and blueberries in the Plant City/Dover area.

Mr. Mathis has demonstrated his commitment to protecting water resources by installing a weather station and soil moisture monitoring through the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and Southwest Florida Water Management District's MiniFARMS program. The MiniFARMS program is a cost share program for growers who have less than 100 acres under irrigation. Mr. Mathis has also utilized frost cloth to protect his berries from freezes, rather than utilizing overhead irrigation. He has been progressive in determining ways to grow berries under high tunnels, conserve water, limit disease and open new market windows.

Mr. Mathis has been committed to the community through his support and involvement in youth agriculture programs at the Florida Strawberry Festival. In 2013, Mr. Mathis was honored for his support of our youth and was named Agriculturalist of the Year by the Greater Plant City Chamber of Commerce Agri-Business Committee.