

2017 CARES Recipient

Farm: Mosaic Sod

Location: Bowling Green, Florida

Date of Origination: 2002

Commodities: Sod



Under the leadership of Land Utilization Manager, Tom Pospichal, Mosaic Sod was created in 2002 as an experimental venture to grow 50 acres of St. Augustine sod on reclaimed mined phosphate land in Polk County, Florida. With the intention of adapting new technology in order to be better stewards of their land, Pospichal and staff have grown their sod operation into more than 330 acres.

Pospichal implements Best Management Practices, which are practical, cost-effective actions that agricultural producers can take to conserve water and reduce the amount of pesticides, fertilizers, animal waste and other pollutants entering our water resources. In sharing the history of their operation, Pospichal also describes the use of BMPs. He explained that during the construction of the sod farm they incorporated a 200 foot vegetative buffer strip surrounding the fields to prevent any turbid run off. They have continued this practice with all the expansion fields constructed. In addition, eucalyptus borders have been planted for wind buffering and insect deterrents.

The 5 center pivots are regularly calibrated to ensure water savings and field tensiometers have been used to establish field capacity ranges and prevent over watering. Sensors provide real time pivot movement, water pressure, quantities and pivot speed, which are monitored on a smart phone. Annual soil and tissue tests help fine tune the fertility program. Most recently, they have incorporated GPS guidance systems in the fertilizer

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applicator's equipment to ensure nutrient uniformity. They have adopted an integrated pest management program, which includes scouting, weather, and irrigation practice to reduce chemical applications. Lastly, all irrigation pumped from a surface reservoir.

Each of Pospichal's BMPs work together to reduce water use, improve water quality and protect local natural resources. Florida Farm Bureau is proud to award Tom Pospichal and Mosaic Sod the 2017 This Farm CARES designation for implementing long-term efforts to preserve their reclaimed land.