



United States Department of Agriculture

Louisiana's Conservation Update

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Helping People Help the Land

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April 2014

From the Rice Fields
of Acadia Parish
to Your Table

Louisiana Crawfish

Story from the Field
Tangipahoa Parish
**"Our goal is to have
a legacy forest . . ."**

A cooperative partnership with local
Soil and Water Conservation Districts and
Resource Conservation and Development Councils (RC&D)

Projects · Successes · Partnerships



The Conservation Update is distributed monthly by mail and e-mail.

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On the Cover



Gerard and Dana Frey's 2,500 acre rice/crawfish farm is located near Iota, Louisiana, in the heart of Cajun country. To learn more about their farm and the secret to their success, see pages 4 and 5.



 Follow us on YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/LouisianaNRCS>

 Follow us on Twitter: http://twitter.com/NRCS_Louisiana

Notes from the State Conservationist

Some say diversity is the secret to sustainable farming and business operations. Louisiana's rice producers have used crop rotation, or diversity, for years, with crawfish following rice. Rice and crawfish make a perfect marriage on the farm and on the dinner table!

Diversity in conservation practices is also key to sustainable farming. We call these conservation systems—a unique assembly of practices meeting the producer's individual operation. Producers who pay close attention to conserving and protecting the natural resources of their farms and ranches use multiple agriculture and conservation methods to ensure the cleanest water, healthiest soil, and most productive crops. Progressive producers use a conservation planning process to analyze various options, identify conservation practices best suited to meet their needs, and schedule implementation. Components of a conservation plan may address nutrient management, grazing management, or wildlife management—depending on the producer's objectives for their farm or ranch and the specific needs of a given acre or field.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service will help you develop a conservation plan for your farm or ranch. We will work with you to identify resource needs or opportunities, lay out options and create a system of conservation practices designed to meet your objectives, address your natural resource needs, and schedule practices to be implemented on your time schedule. Call our office today to start the planning process.

Kevin Norton
State Conservationist



A directory of our offices is included on the last page of this publication.

Crawfish are an excellent source of protein.

Fat content of washed crawfish tail meat is only about 1% of the Recommended Daily Allowance (RDA). Crawfish muscle fibers are shorter than the muscle fibers in red meats and are more easily digested. They are also low in calories, fat and saturated fat, and a good source of vitamins.

It takes approximately 7 pounds of live crawfish to yield 1 pound of peeled tails. Large, mature crawfish have a lower yield of meat per pound than immature crawfish.

Although crawfish tend to be higher in cholesterol than most other shellfish, **a 3 1/2- ounce serving provides only about half of the daily recommended allowance.**

Consuming a diet high in seafood has been shown to reduce the incidence of Alzheimer's, angina, stroke, asthma, heart disease and cancer.

Source: Louisiana Crawfish Promotion and Research Board, <http://www.crawfish.org/nutrition.html>

Louisiana Crawfish *Ag Facts*





From the LOUISIANA



In 1983, the crawfish was designated as Louisiana's official state crustacean.



Gerard and Dana Frey's 2,500 acre rice/crawfish farm is located near Iota, Louisiana, in the heart of Cajun country.

While their primary crops are rice and crawfish, they also have dairy and beef cattle, and soybeans.

"I have been driving a tractor since I was 6 years old," said Gerard Frey. "All I have ever known is farming."

In 2004 Gerard Frey came to a crossroads in his life, his health became a major concern. He had a kidney transplant, and his doctor said he could no longer handle crawfish because of the risk of infection. To

many people, this may have meant selling the farm or retirement, but not the Freys. Gerard stepped back from the crawfish, and Dana stepped forward . . . and the rest, as they say, is history, or in this case "herstory."

Dana Frey not only accepted the challenge of running the crawfish farm, she kicked it up a notch and added the processing plant. Today, the Frey's not only sell crawfish grown on the farm, they add value to the crawfish by cooking and packaging it for your local grocery store. They also produce frozen crawfish entrees.

Not handling crawfish has not slowed Gerard down. He

farms rice and soybeans and raises cattle on his farm, and he runs several agriculture-related businesses.

"Diversity is the key to our success," said Gerard.

"From an early age, I had to learn how to do everything on a farm. Today, I use that knowledge on my farm—and to help others."

"We love what we do," said Dana. "If Gerard and I didn't truly love this work, there is no way that we could do it all."

Long-time conservationists, Gerard and Dana also recognize the importance of protecting and conserving the natural resources of their farm.

Dana and Gerard Frey Conservationists



Rice Fields of Acadia Parish to Your Table

SIANA CRAWFISH



“Conservation has been the backbone for our growth and success as an operation, without it we wouldn’t even be in business now,” said Gerard.

Working with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Freys implemented precision agriculture and land leveling on their farm. As a result, they use less water, less herbicides, and save energy, and they have consistency in the size and amount of their crawfish harvest.

“We want to deliver the best product to our customer,” said Gerard. “Our crawfish are grown and harvested in clean water

and immediately processed and packed for sale—it is about as fresh as you can get.”

The Freys have worked with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Conservation Stewardship Program, and the Migratory Bird Habitat Initiative. Gerard and Dana Frey are enrolled in the Louisiana Master Farmer Program, and they are looking forward to certification as Master Farmers this year. Gerard is a district supervisor with the Acadia Soil and Water Conservation District.



To find out more about conservation opportunities on your farm or ranch, visit your local USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. An office directory is included on the last page of this publication.

Around the State

Mar 17

Australian Rotary Vocational Training Team visits Golden Meadow

PMC: Rotary International District 6200, which encompasses most of south Louisiana, participated in a Global Grant which funds Vocational Training Teams (VTT) exchanged between two international districts. A VTT is a group of professionals sponsored by Rotary International who travel to another country either to learn more about their profession or to teach local professionals about a particular field. This year, District 6200 welcomed a VTT group from Australia which is composed of one Rotarian and four professionals from agricultural fields. As they visit Rotary Clubs across the district, they visit a variety of businesses and sites that relate to their professions. The Rotary Club of Golden Meadow brought the team to the Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center located in Galliano. The team was given a tour of the facility and shown several types of plants that are used to restore Louisiana's marshes and levees. The group discussed issues cattlemen and sheep herdsman are having because of severe drought. The group feels that some of the types of grasses growing here in Louisiana may offer a more drought resistant grass for their cattle and sheep.



Are you interested in volunteering for conservation? Contact your local NRCS office and ask about the Earth Team Volunteer Program.

Mar 18–20

State of the Coast Conference: NRCS recently participated in the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana's State of the Coast Conference March 18–20, 2014, at the Ernest Morial Convention Center in New Orleans, Louisiana. In addition to an exhibit, NRCS employees Garret Thomassie and Curt Riche presented posters during the conference.



Mar 19

Evangeline SWCD Honors Earl Fontenot

Fontenot: Earl Fontenot, Jr. recently stepped down from the Evangeline SWCD after 47 years of service. The district hosted a reception for him on March 19th at the LSU AgCenter in Ville Platte. Mr. Fontenot is a charter member of the SWCD and served as chairman for 27 years.

Mar 26–28

Volunteers from Sumner High School FFA visit Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center

Earth Team: Earth Team volunteers from Sumner High School FFA visited the Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center on March 26–28, 2014. The volunteers propagated Bitter panicum, built and cleaned planter boxes, and transferred sea oats. *This Week in Louisiana Agriculture* featured the visit on their April 11th show. To watch the story, visit <http://t.co/P1s5P3cysc>.



Apr 5

Southwest Louisiana Cattleman's Field Day

The McNeese State University Harold and Pearl Dripps Department of Agricultural Sciences and District V of the Louisiana Cattlemen's Association sponsored the Southwest Louisiana Cattleman's Field Day on April 5, 2014. Johanna Pate and Frank Chapman gave presentations on soil health and the Farm Bill. Additionally, Chris Ebel demonstrated the use of the rainfall simulator to attendees.

Apr 7

Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center Tree Donation

On April 7th, the Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center donated 100 green ash, American elm, and willow oak trees to the South Lafourche Library. The Plant Materials Center donates annually to the library in honor of both Earth Day and Arbor Day.



Apr 12

Party for the Planet

The Alexandria Zoo hosted the annual "Party for the Planet" on April 12, 2014. Visitors to the NRCS booth learned about wildlife found in wetlands and participated in duck races. Alphonse the Alligator and Terry the Turtle attended along with the two newest members of the NRCS wetlands menagerie, Wallace and Juanita Wood Duck.



Helping People Help the Land

Stories from the Field

“Our goal is to have a legacy forest . . .”

Brookie Hayden and his wife Lindy are progressive forest landowners in central Tangipahoa Parish. Both are retired school teachers, and they manage over 300 acres of loblolly pine forest for timber and wildlife. Currently, they have recently thinned the forest and want to aggressively incorporate a prescribed burning program that will control underbrush and open the forest up for improved wildlife habitat.



“We just don’t want to own the forest, we want to manage the forest for our benefit and the benefit of our grandchildren. Our goal is to have a legacy forest that our grandchildren will become a part of,” says Lindy.

Under the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program Working

Lands for Wildlife initiative, we developed a ten-year conservation plan that concentrates on the use of prescribed burnings to open the forest floor and make the forest more wildlife friendly; especially for the gopher tortoise, a listed endangered species. The conservation plan also addresses the control of cogon grass, an invasive noxious grass that is present throughout the Hayden’s Forest. As part of the Hayden’s conservation plan, they recently treated two acres of cogon grass, and prescribed burns will start this year.

Brookie Hayden is a member of the Louisiana Forestry Commission.

Submitted by: Tony Beaubouef, NRCS District Conservationist, Amite Field Office

Upcoming Events

Mar 31-Aug 30

“I Remember...” An Art Show of Environmental Significance: The Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act Task Force in Partnership with the LSU T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History is exhibiting the “I Remember...” art show, featuring select archival materials from LSU Libraries Special Collection, photographer Lane Lefort and artist Marian Brister Martinez, at the Hill Memorial Library March 31–August 30, 2014.

Apr 27

Louisiana Earth Day 2014: NRCS will participate in the Louisiana Earth Day celebration in Baton Rouge on April 27, 2014.

Apr 30

CWPPRA Dedication Ceremony: The Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection, and Restoration Act (CWPPRA) Task Force and the State of Louisiana will celebrate the progress on 18 CWPPRA projects at 10 a.m. on April 30, 2014, at ConocoPhillips in Houma, Louisiana. For more information or to RSVP, please call (337) 266-8623 or e-mail jcoen@usgs.gov.

May 16

Louisiana Women in Agriculture Farm Tour: Acadiana RC&D, Capital RC&D and NRCS will host the Louisiana Women in Agriculture Farm Tour on Friday, May 16, 2014, from 7:45 a.m. until 5 p.m. Participants will have an opportunity to network with other women in agriculture and learn about agri-tourism, cattle and goat operations, and crawfish production. Space is limited, so pre-registration

is required. Contact Angie Fogleman at angie@acadianarc.com for more information.

Jul 10

LSU AgCenter Northeast Region Rolling Crops Field Tour: The LSU AgCenter will host a “Rolling Crops Field Tour” on Thursday, July 10, 2014. The tour will begin and end at the Macon Ridge Research Station in Winnsboro, Louisiana. Registration starts at 11 a.m. and tour vans will depart the station at 11:30 a.m. The tour will travel to a variety of demonstration plots in West Carroll, Richland and Franklin Parishes highlighting soybean, cotton, and corn production and pest management. Please contact Tara Smith, tsmith@agcenter.lsu.edu or Donnie Miller, dmiller@agcenter.lsu.edu, for additional details.



Contact Our Offices

Visit our web site at:
www.la.nrcs.usda.gov

Parish	Field Office	Soil and Water Conservation District	Address	Telephone
Acadia	Crowley	Acadia SWCD	157 Cherokee Drive, Suite C, Crowley, LA 70526	(337) 783-5823, ext. 3
Allen	Oberlin	Allen SWCD	309 North 1st Street, Suite 1, Oberlin, LA 70655	(337) 639-4850, ext. 3
Ascension	Donaldsonville	Lower Delta SWCD and New River SWCD	2438 Highway 1 South, Donaldsonville, LA 70346	(225) 473-7638, ext. 3
Assumption	Donaldsonville	Lower Delta SWCD	2438 Highway 1 South, Donaldsonville, LA 70346	(225) 473-7638, ext. 3
Avoyelles	Marksville	Avoyelles SWCD	629 Tunica Drive West, Marksville, LA 71351	(318) 253-9445, ext. 3
Beauregard	DeRidder	Calcasieu SWCD	597 Mahlon Street, Suite B, DeRidder, LA 70634	(337) 463-8555, ext. 3
Bienville	Minden	Saline SWCD	216B Broadway, Minden, LA 71055	(318) 377-3950, ext. 3
Bossier	Benton	Bodcau SWCD	200 Burt Boulevard, Suite 101, Benton, LA 71006-4901	(318) 965-2185, ext. 3
Caddo	Shreveport	Caddo SWCD	1402 Hawn Avenue, Shreveport, LA 71107	(318) 676-3461, ext. 3
Calcasieu	Lake Charles	Gulf Coast SWCD	5417 Gerstner Memorial Drive, Lake Charles, LA 70601	(337) 474-1583, ext. 3
Caldwell	Columbia	Boeuf and Dugdemona SWCD	7128 Highway 165 South, Suite 2, Columbia, LA 71418	(318) 649-2651, ext. 3
Cameron	Lake Charles	Gulf Coast SWCD	5417 Gerstner Memorial Drive, Lake Charles, LA 70601	(337) 474-1583, ext. 3
Catahoula	Jonesville	Catahoula SWCD	3545 4th Street, Jonesville, LA 71343	(318) 339-4239, ext. 3
Claiborne	Minden	D'Arbonne SWCD	216B Broadway, Minden, LA 71055	(318) 377-3950, ext. 3
Concordia	Ferriday	Tensas-Concordia SWCD	8331 Highway 84, Ferriday, LA 71334	(318) 757-2455, ext. 3
DeSoto	Mansfield	DeSoto SWCD	332 Lake Road, Mansfield, LA 71052	(318) 872-4949, ext. 3
East Baton Rouge	Denham Springs	Capital SWCD	907 Florida Boulevard, SW, Denham Springs, LA 70726	(225) 664-1430, ext. 3
East Carroll	Lake Providence	East Carroll SWCD	406 Lake Street, Suite C, Lake Providence, LA 71254	(318) 559-2604, ext. 3
East Feliciana	Clinton	Feliciana SWCD	9752 Plank Road South, Clinton, LA 70722	(225) 683-5496, ext. 3
Evangeline	Ville Platte	Evangeline SWCD	205 Court Street, Ville Platte, LA 70586	(337) 363-6602, ext. 3
Franklin	Winnsboro	Northeast SWCD	616 Riser Road, Winnsboro, LA 71295	(318) 435-6743, ext. 3
Grant	Colfax	Grant SWCD	510 Main Street, Colfax, LA 71417	(318) 627-9903, ext. 3
Iberia	New Iberia	Iberia SWCD	2617 Northside Road, Suite 600, New Iberia, LA 70563	(337) 369-6623, ext. 3
Iberville	Addis	Lower Delta SWCD	7747 Highway 1 South, Addis, LA 70710	(225) 687-2184, ext. 3
Jackson	Ruston	Dugdemona SWCD	1412 Celebrity Drive, Ruston, LA 71270	(318) 255-3136, ext. 3
Jefferson	New Orleans	Crescent SWCD	1041 Rue La Cannes, Luling, LA 70070	(985) 331-9084
Jefferson Davis	Jennings	Jefferson Davis SWCD	2003 Port Drive, Jennings, LA 70546	(337) 824-0975, ext. 3
Lafayette	Lafayette	Lafayette SWCD	905 Jefferson Street, Suite 310, Lafayette, LA 70501-7913	(337) 262-6601, ext. 3
Lafourche	Thibodaux	Lafourche-Terrebonne SWCD	143 Laura Drive, Thibodaux, LA 70301	(985) 447-3871, ext. 3
LaSalle	Jonesville	LaSalle SWCD	3545 4th Street, Jonesville, LA 71343	(318) 339-4239, ext. 3
Lincoln	Ruston	D'Arbonne SWCD	1412 Celebrity Drive, Ruston, LA 71270	(318) 255-3136, ext. 3
Livingston	Denham Springs	Capital SWCD	907 Florida Boulevard, SW, Denham Springs, LA 70726	(225) 664-1430, ext. 3
Madison	Tallulah	Madison SWCD	1900 Crothers Drive, Tallulah, LA 71282	(318) 574-4158, ext. 3
Morehouse	Bastrop	Morehouse SWCD	9604 Marlatt Street, Bastrop, LA 71220	(318) 283-7626, ext. 3
Natchitoches	Natchitoches	Natchitoches SWCD	6949 Louisiana Highway 1 Bypass, Natchitoches, LA 71457	(318) 357-8366, ext. 3
Orleans	New Orleans	Crescent SWCD	1041 Rue La Cannes, Luling, LA 70070	(985) 331-9084
Quachita	Monroe	D'Arbonne/Boeuf River SWCD	2410 Old Sterling Road, Suite B, Monroe, LA 71203-2668	(318) 343-4467, ext. 3
Plaquemines	New Orleans	Plaquemines SWCD	1041 Rue La Cannes, Luling, LA 70070	(985) 331-9084
Pointe Coupee	New Roads	Upper Delta SWCD	180 East Main Street, New Roads, LA 70760	(225) 638-7746, ext. 3
Rapides	Alexandria	Rapides SWCD	3734 Government Street, Building C, Alexandria, LA 71303	(318) 473-7856, ext. 3
Red River	Coushatta	Red River SWCD	1311 Ringgold Avenue, Coushatta, LA 71019	(318) 932-4352, ext. 3
Richland	Rayville	Boeuf River SWCD	141 Industrial Loop, Rayville, LA 71269	(318) 728-4451, ext. 3
Sabine	Many	Sabine SWCD	570 Highway 171 By Pass, Many, LA 71449	(318) 256-3491
St. Bernard	New Orleans	Crescent SWCD	1041 Rue La Cannes, Luling, LA 70070	(985) 331-9084
St. Charles	New Orleans	Crescent SWCD	1041 Rue La Cannes, Luling, LA 70070	(985) 331-9084
St. Helena	Amite	Tangipahoa-St. Helena SWCD	805 West Oak Street, Suite 1, Amite, LA 70422-2820	(985) 748-8751, ext. 3
St. James	Donaldsonville	Lower Delta SWCD and New River SWCD	2438 Highway 1 South, Donaldsonville, LA 70346	(225) 473-7638, ext. 3
St. John	New Orleans	Crescent SWCD	1041 Rue La Cannes, Luling, LA 70070	(985) 331-9084
St. Landry	Opelousas	St. Landry SWCD	5832 I-49 North Service Road, Opelousas, LA 70570	(337) 942-2530, ext. 3
St. Martin	Lafayette	St. Martin SWCD	905 Jefferson Street, Suite 310, Lafayette, LA 70501-7913	(337) 262-6601, ext. 3
St. Mary	Franklin	St. Mary SWCD	500 Main Street, Franklin, LA 70538	(337) 828-1461, ext. 3
St. Tammany	Franklinton	Bogue Chitto-Pearl River SWCD	1111 Washington Street, Franklinton, LA 70438	(985) 839-5688, ext. 3
Tangipahoa	Amite	Tangipahoa-St. Helena SWCD	805 West Oak Street, Suite 1, Amite, LA 70422-2820	(985) 748-8751, ext. 3
Tensas	St. Joseph	Tensas-Concordia SWCD	1223 Plank Road, St. Joseph, LA 71366	(318) 766-3502, ext. 3
Terrebonne	Thibodaux	Lafourche-Terrebonne SWCD	143 Laura Drive, Thibodaux, LA 70301	(985) 447-3871, ext. 3
Union	Farmerville	D'Arbonne SWCD	501 Glory Road, Farmerville, LA 71241	(318) 368-8021
Vermilion	Abbeville	Vermilion SWCD	3221 Veterans Memorial Drive, Suite H, Abbeville, LA 70510	(337) 893-5664, ext. 3
Vernon	Leesville	Calcasieu SWCD	205 North 5th Street, Leesville, LA 71446	(337) 239-2193
Washington	Franklinton	Bogue Chitto-Pearl River SWCD	1111 Washington Street, Franklinton, LA 70438	(985) 839-5688, ext. 3
Webster	Minden	Dorcheat SWCD	216B Broadway, Minden, LA 71055	(318) 377-3950, ext. 3
West Baton Rouge	Addis	Upper Delta SWCD	7747 Highway 1, South, Addis, LA 70710	(225) 687-2184, ext. 3
West Carroll	Oak Grove	West Carroll SWCD	208 South Constitution Street, Oak Grove, LA 71263	(318) 428-9303, ext. 3
West Feliciana	Clinton	Feliciana SWCD	9752 Plank Road South, Clinton, LA 70722	(225) 683-5496, ext. 3
Winn	Natchitoches	Dugdemona SWCD	6949 Louisiana Highway 1 Bypass, Natchitoches, LA 71457	(318) 357-8366, ext. 3

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