



United States Department of Agriculture

Louisiana's Conservation Update

Natural Resources Conservation Service

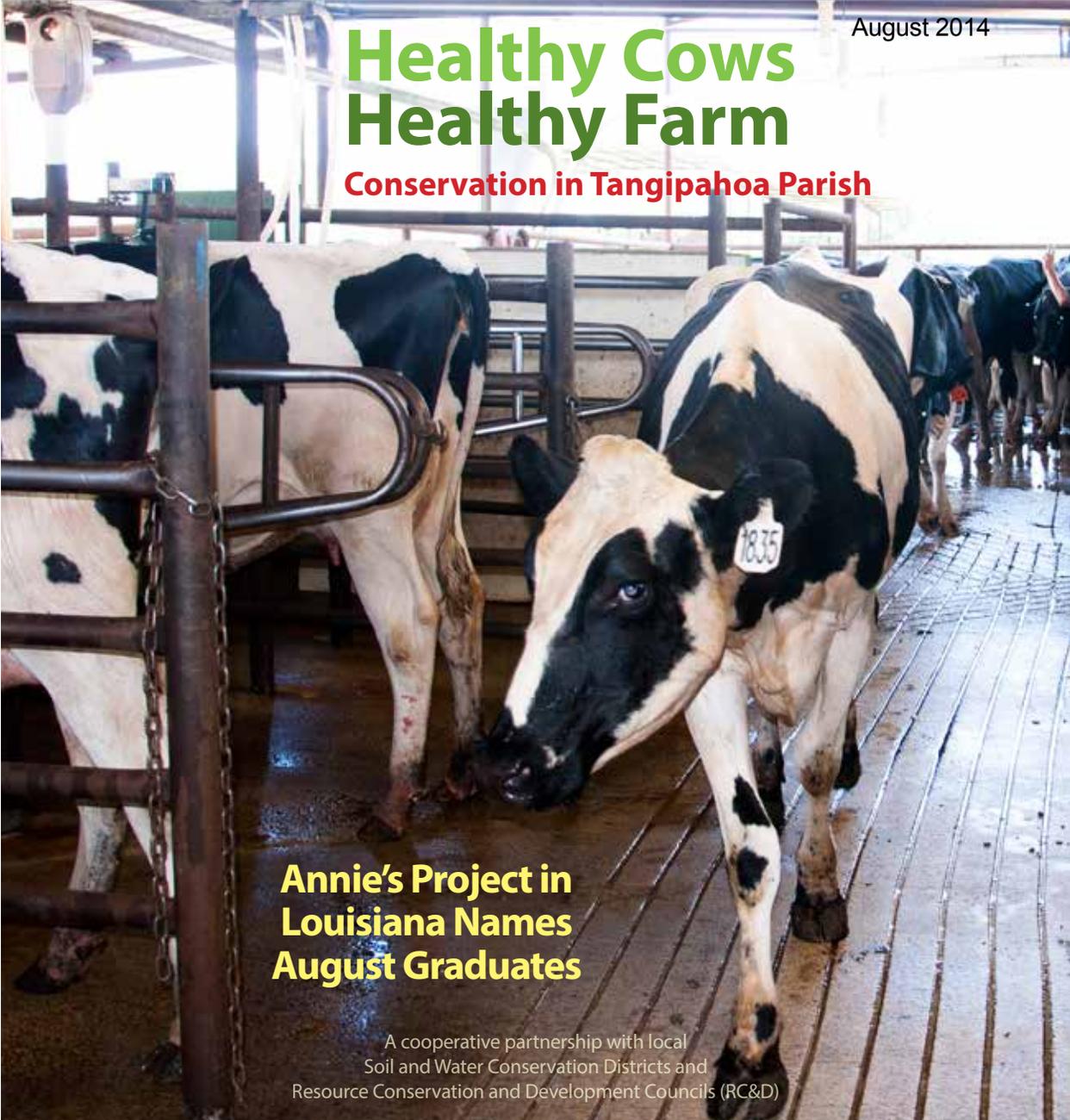
Helping People Help the Land

www.la.nrcs.usda.gov

August 2014

Healthy Cows Healthy Farm

Conservation in Tangipahoa Parish



Annie's Project in Louisiana Names August Graduates

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.

If you would like to receive monthly issues of the Conservation Update, please send your mailing address or e-mail address to:

Holly Martien
State Public Affairs Specialist
USDA Natural Resources
Conservation Service
3737 Government Street
Alexandria, Louisiana 71302
or
holly.martien@la.usda.gov

USDA
Natural Resources
Conservation Service
3737 Government Street
Alexandria, Louisiana 71302
(318) 473-7751

Table of Contents

Ag Facts.....2
Milk production in Louisiana

Notes from the State Conservationist3
Keeping farmers in compliance

Healthy Cows Healthy Farm.....4
Conservation practices help dairy production in Tangipahoa Parish

Partner Success.....6
Annie's Project graduates

Upcoming Events6
Mark your calendar

Around the State.....7
Conservation activities around the state

Contact Information.....8
Call us with your questions

On the Cover



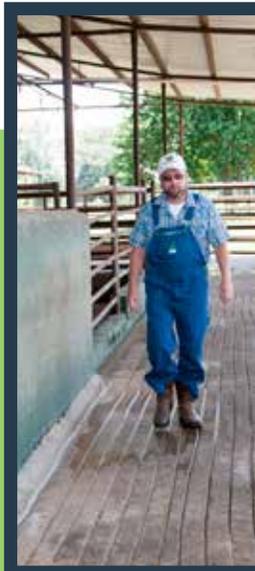
Riding with his grandpa checking heifers made a lifelong impression on Stewart LeBlanc. At an early age, LeBlanc knew he wanted to be in the dairy business. To learn more about the LeBlanc Dairy Farm and how conservation practices help dairy operations, see pages 4 and 5.



In 2013

- There were 125 dairy producers
- There were 14,798 dairy cows
- These cows produced 203,668,196 pounds of milk
- This milk was valued at \$44,216,365

in Louisiana



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

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

Notes from the State Conservationist

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) works with farmers and ranchers to identify natural resource problems or concerns on their farms and ranches. We work with a farmer or rancher to identify their objectives, study information about their farm, and develop solutions for their resource concerns. The farmer or rancher chooses which solution works best for their situation, and NRCS provides technical and financial assistance to implement the solution.

To put it simply, NRCS provides advice and the farmer or rancher decides whether or not to follow our advice.

In recent months, dairy farms across the nation have experienced increased scrutiny by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). EPA inspections to ensure compliance with the Clean Water Act are currently occurring on dairy farms in Louisiana.

In this month's issue of Conservation Update, we visit a dairy farm in Tangipahoa Parish that recently experienced an inspection by EPA . . . and passed. This farm passed because the dairy farmer chose to implement conservation practices to protect natural resources—and it paid off. It paid off in the quality of animal health, in reduction of soil loss through erosion, in herd management, in production costs, in farm profitability, and in compliance with Clean Water Act regulations.

Conservation pays. Visit our offices to find out how we can help you on your farm or ranch.

Kevin D. Norton
State Conservationist



Milk production was reported by 12 parishes in 2013. Three parishes in the southeastern part of the state and two parishes in the northwestern part accounted for about 93 percent of the milk produced, 93 percent of the number of cows and 92 percent of the dairy herds. The number of dairy farms declined from 135 in 2012 to 125 in 2013. The number of milking cows decreased from 15,811 head in 2012 to 14,798 head in 2013. In addition, total milk production decreased from 218.4 million pounds in 2012 to 203.7 million pounds in 2013.

Ag Facts

From: LSU AgCenter, Louisiana Summary, Agriculture and Natural Resources, <http://www.lsuagcenter.com/agsummary/narrative>

Visit your local office of the Natural Resources Conservation Service to learn how conservation practices can benefit dairy farms. A directory of our offices is on the back cover of this publication.



“My grandfather was in the business.”

Stewart LeBlanc’s grandfather was a row crop farmer, and he had a dairy replacement business. Riding with his grandfather checking heifers made a lifelong impression on LeBlanc, and from an early age, he dreamed of following in his grandfather’s footsteps and becoming a farmer.

Dreams don’t always come easy or quickly. LeBlanc worked for several years in local plants to support his family—buying and selling replacement heifers on the side—always keeping the dream of his own dairy farm in the back of his mind.

“I was miserable working at the plant,” said LeBlanc. As soon as he found a way to start his own farm, he quit his job at the plant and never looked back.

LeBlanc started his dairy business in 2007. Thanks to good parents, he had the land to start his dairy, but he says, “I was broke.”

“I visited a local fence company to discuss cross fencing, and they told me about NRCS and how they could help me with my fencing costs. I visited the local NRCS office to find out what they had to offer, and I have been working with them ever since.”

LeBlanc began his relationship with NRCS through the beginning farmers and ranchers program. This voluntary program offers incentives under the Environmental Quality Incentives Program to new farmers to ensure equal access to USDA programs and services.

“It was a great program to help me get started,” said LeBlanc. “I could never have accomplished the things I have on my farm without NRCS assistance.”

Through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program LeBlanc has installed cross fencing, shade

structures, pipeline, water troughs, and heavy use area protection pads. His cows have great pastures for rotational grazing and plenty of water in each pasture thanks to the pipeline and water troughs. Concrete pads protect heavy use areas (such as lanes and water troughs) from erosion. He has also installed a no-discharge animal waste management system (dairy lagoon) and waste water irrigation system to apply nutrients to his pastures.

“These conservation practices didn’t cost hardly anything out of my pocket, and they help me manage my cows more efficiently,” said LeBlanc. “They help keep my



Stewart LeBlanc
Conservationist



“It was all I ever knew—riding around with him.”

Stewart LeBlanc



cows cleaner and healthier—and production running smoothly.”

Being a good steward of the land is an ongoing process, and LeBlanc is currently working with NRCS to extend the travel lane to his milking barn. The extended concrete lane will help control erosion, provide a channel to direct rainwater, and significantly reduce the amount of soil from his pastures that ends up in his barn.

Today, dairy farmers are under intense scrutiny by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). EPA conducts inspections on dairy farms to ensure that federal environmental laws (Clean Water Act) are being followed. The conservation practices installed on LeBlanc’s dairy farm

give LeBlanc the tools he needs to stay in compliance.

“I don’t save emails, but I did save the email I got from EPA saying my farm passed inspection,” said LeBlanc.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service works with dairy farmers like Stewart LeBlanc to provide technical and financial assistance to help them keep their cows and their farm healthy and productive—and in compliance.

“Conservation systems can be as simple or as complex as you want,” said LeBlanc. “My system is simple, and it works.”



Partner Success

Annie's Project in Louisiana Names August Graduates

"Annie's Project in Louisiana is excited to name our recent graduates that graduated August 21, 2014, at Southeastern SBDC in Hammond, Louisiana," said Deborah Cross-Young, State Coordinator for Annie's Project.



Annie's Project Louisiana Hammond graduation. Left to right: Heather Hughes of Hammond; Jennifer Coats of Albany; Deborah Cross-Young, State Annie's Coordinator; Delores Andrews of Baton Rouge; Amy Ballard of Holden; Virginia Pirritano of Robert; Sandra Benjamin of Amite; Roberta McKowen of Jackson; and Angie Fogleman of Lafayette (not pictured Caitlin Lambert of Baton Rouge).

Annie's Project, an educational program dedicated to strengthening women's roles in the modern farm enterprise, is supported in Louisiana through the efforts of Capital RC&D and Acadiana RC&D, along with USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, LSU AgCenter, and Southeastern Louisiana University SBDC. Louisiana has graduated three classes and plans for three more in the state. The next session begins on October 9 in Lafayette.

To become a graduate, participants complete six sessions which include: (1) human resources and time management; (2) business plans, property ownership, and leases; (3) financial documentation, retirement,

estate planning, and using spreadsheets; (4) risk management, insurance, and the agri-tourism limited liability law; and (6) financial records and how to interpret them. For more information, please call (985) 543-6570, (225) 281-9470 or (337) 989-0001.

Annie's Project

Risk Management Education
for Farm Women

Register Today!

Annie's Project is Coming to Lafayette in October!

Capital RC&D and Acadiana RC&D will host Annie's Project classes (six sessions) in Lafayette, Louisiana, beginning October 9, 2014. Annie's project is an educational program dedicated to strengthening women's roles in the modern farm enterprise. Through six educational sessions, Annie's Project fosters problem solving, recordkeeping, and decision-making skills in farm women. NRCS is a sponsor of Annie's Project in Louisiana. For more information, please contact Deborah Cross-Young, State Coordinator for Annie's Project, at 985-543-6570.

Mark your calendar!

Upcoming Events

Aug 26-28

Louisiana Forestry Association Annual Meeting: Visit the Natural Resources Conservation Service exhibit at the Louisiana Forestry Association Annual Meeting at Sam's Town Hotel & Casino in Shreveport.

Sep 27

National Hunting and Fishing Day: Visit the NRCS tent at National Hunting and Fishing Day in Woodworth, Louisiana on September 27, 2014.

Oct 4

Boy Scout 2014 Scoutfest: Visit the NRCS tent at the Boy Scout 2014 Scoutfest at Camp Avondale in Clinton, Louisiana.

Oct 9

Annie's Project Lafayette: Register today to participate in Annie's Project Risk Management Education for

Women in Lafayette. Sessions begin October 9. Contact Deborah Cross-Young at (985) 543-6570 for more information.

Nov 14

Louisiana Women in Agriculture Conference: The 2014 Louisiana Women in Agriculture Conference will be hosted on November 14, 2014, at the LSU AgCenter in Napoleonville, Louisiana. Registration for this event is \$20. For more information, or to register, contact Angie Fogleman at Acadiana RC&D at (337) 262-1776.

Around the State

Jul 18

Morehouse Parish Black Farmers Association Meeting:

On July 18, 2014, the Morehouse Parish Black Farmers Association hosted a meeting in Morehouse Parish at Harper Armstrong's farm. During the meeting, NRCS provided a soil health demonstration using the Rainfall Simulator.



Jul 28 - Aug 1

Conference on Ecological and Ecosystem Restoration:

NRCS hosted an exhibit at the Conference on Ecological and Ecosystem Restoration (CEER) July 28–August 1, 2014, in New Orleans, Louisiana. In addition to the exhibit, NRCS Assistant Chief Kirk Hanlin was a guest speaker at the plenary session on Mississippi River Restoration, and Louisiana NRCS employees Ron Boustany and Loland Broussard were conference presenters.



Aug 2

The Big Event

On August 2, 2014, Trailblazer RC&D hosted The Big Event 2014 at Grambling State University. Farmers, ranchers, landowners, and others attended this event and heard from a host of presenters on topics such as soil health; undercover farming with hoop houses/high tunnels; USDA program opportunities through the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Farm Service Agency, and Rural Development; entrepreneurship opportunities; best management practices for water quality; and oil and gas lease considerations. Special guests were the Roberson family who discussed their success through the USDA's StrikeForce Initiative for Rural Growth and Opportunity.

Jul 29

NRCS Assistant Chief Visits Coastal Louisiana Marshes:

While in Louisiana for the Conference on Ecological and Ecosystem Restoration, NRCS Assistant Chief, Kirk Hanlin, visited a coastal marsh area close to New Orleans, Louisiana, to learn more about NRCS's role in conserving this valuable area of our state. Britt Paul, Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources, and Loland Broussard, Civil Engineer, led Mr. Hanlin on a tour of several NRCS-sponsored Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (CWPPRA) projects in the Barataria Basin.





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) 665-4253, 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) 665-4253, 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

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination against its customers. If you believe you experienced discrimination when obtaining services from USDA, participating in a USDA program, or participating in a program that receives financial assistance from USDA, you may file a complaint with USDA. Information about how to file a discrimination complaint is available from the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights. USDA prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex (including gender identity and expression), marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs, genetic information, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) To file a complaint of discrimination, complete, sign, and mail a program discrimination complaint form, available at any USDA office location or online at www.ascr.usda.gov, or write to: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410. Or call toll free at (866) 632-9992 (voice) to obtain additional information, the appropriate office or to request documents. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay service at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (in Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.