



Kentucky Conservationist Success Stories

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Beginner Farmers Make Conservation a Priority on Their Farm

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Tim and Cathleen Bentley own and operate a 180 acre farm on Brookstown Road in Madison County, Kentucky. The family manages a 50-head cow/calf operation. Both Tim and Cathleen are new to farming. Tim grew up in the mountains of Eastern Kentucky and Cathleen moved to Kentucky from Florida. Being eager to learn the business of farming, the Bentleys sought advice from the USDA Service Center in Richmond.

They purchased the farm in 2001 and numerous improvements were necessary to operate a productive beef cattle farm. Fences were in disrepair, cattle drank directly from ponds and streams, and the pasture fields were continuously grazed.

In 2002, the Bentleys received an Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) contract to make conservation improvements on their farm. Since that time, the

Bentleys have made the following improvements using various conservation practices and programs on their farm:

- A severely eroded portion of a pasture field was treated with Critical Area Planting (342).
- Over four thousand feet of Pipeline (516) and five Watering Facilities (614) were installed to facilitate Prescribed Grazing (528).
- A winter feeding lot was treated with Heavy Use Area Protection (561).
- Over one hundred acres of Pasture and Hayland Planting (512) were completed, converting fescue to an orchard grass, clover, and alfalfa mixture.
- Over four thousand feet of Fence (382) were installed to exclude cattle from a stream that runs through the farm.
- A Stream Crossing (578) was installed to control streambank erosion and still allow the movement of cattle.



The Bentleys have participated in other programs as well. In 2004, they completed a Covered Feeding Area/Waste Storage Facility (313) through the Kentucky State Cost-share Program. A Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan was written and is being implemented as a result.



The Bentley Farm is an excellent example of the impact that EQIP can have on the environment and in support of beginning farmers.

