

## **FEATURE – ALABAMA FARM FAMILY HELPS COMMUNITY**

**INTRO:** A southeastern Alabama farm family is getting help from USDA to make their operation more efficient and environmentally friendly. In turn they are helping local youth and low income people. The USDA's Bob Ellison has more. (1:39)

THE SHIPMAN FARM IN SOUTHEASTERN ALABAMA HAS BEEN IN THE FAMILY SINCE THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY. AND TO HELP MODERNIZE IT, THE SHIPMANS PARTNERED WITH THE U-S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE'S NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE. THROUGH THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM, N-R-C-S HELPED INSTALL AN EFFICIENT WATERING SYSTEM TO RAISE PRODUCE AND LIVESTOCK.

Jimmy Hatcher USDA NRCS: So we discussed different ways of maybe watering the goats and we felt like the well would be the best way to go, especially since they wanted to use the well for the micro-irrigation.

Barbara Shipman, Barbour County, AL Farmer: Having the NRCS plan implement the micro-irrigation system has helped us tremendously because we were able to produce a better crop with the watermelons this year. And with the micro-irrigation system we would be able to produce more collard greens, turnip greens and the lettuce and mixed greens for the market.

IN TURN, THE SHIPMANS USED THEIR INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY TO RESTART A FARMERS MARKET.

Shipman: The majority of the customers that shop here are senior citizens and many of them do not drive so I feel that this is a great asset to them.

THEY ALSO CONTRIBUTED TO FOUR-H TO HELP AREA YOUTH.

Andrew Williams, USDA NRCS: The Shipmans loaned the goats to the youths to raise and to show for four-h.

Shipman: We have the four-h master garden program and the students are able to plant vegetables they can sell at the farmers market and buy things to enhance our four-h clubs. An idle mind is the devil's workshop, but as long as our kids are doing things that are positive then the chances are better for them not to go to prison and to get into trouble that they can't get out of.

FOR THE U-S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, I'M BOB ELLISON.