

## **FEATURE – USDA ASSISTS MOTHER, DAUGHTER FARM TEAM**

INTRO: A mother and daughter farming together in northern Florida are making environmental improvements to their operation with USDA's help. The USDA's Bob Ellison has more. (1:40)

ANN AND EVIE BLOUNT RAISE CATTLE, GOATS AND TREES ON THEIR NORTH FLORIDA FARM. THIS MOTHER AND DAUGHTER FARM TEAM HAVE WORKED WITH THE U-S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA TO MAKE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS. THE BLOUNTS HAVE BEEN HELPED BY U-S-D-A' S NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE TO CONTROL LIVESTOCK GRAZING.

Jason Hayford, USDA NRCS: We did quite a bit of fence for rotational grazing and then put in some watering facilities and pipeline so as to help them get that grazing system established.

Dr. Ann Blount, Gadsden Co., FL Farmer, Univ. of FL Agronomist: This lets those pasture plants rest and during that rest period they are able to generate new leaves and new root systems and get some height and size to them. When the cattle graze it they graze a small pasture area very clean and then we move them to another pasture. As far as the technical assistance that's where I think NRCS really comes into play because a lot of folks just aren't aware of just pasture systems.

BLOUNT AND HER DAUGHTER ARE ALSO COOPERATING WITH N-R-C-S AND THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA ON EXPERIMENTS TO HELP CONTROL WEEDS AND REPLANT NATIVE GRASSES.

Blount: Looking at how cattle can be used to graze weeds rather than use herbicides.

Evie Blount, Gadsden Co., FL Farmer: We use the goats to clean out the weeds around where the cows were in the pastures and back in tree lines and everything. They get all the weeds like the dog fennel and they just clean it all down

Blount: We have a number of graduate students who try different types of cropping practices. That's involved some of the folks from NRCS because we've looked at putting some of the native grasses back under pine trees that have been thinned.

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