

CONSERVATION SHOWCASE



Pioneer of Conservation Benefits from NRCS' CSP Program

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Before the heyday of no-till and other conservation practices, David Barton had them at work on his Raymond, Miss. farm.

Barton's family had farmed the central Mississippi fields since the 1930s, learning creative ways to deal with the soil that was highly prone to erosion.

"I was concerned about the erosion," Barton said of the reason why he enrolled his farm in Natural Resources Conservation Service's Conservation Security Program.

Upping the stakes was Fourteen Mile/ Baker Creek, which snakes through Barton's Canaan Plantation farm.

"With these programs, no sediments and nutrients are going into the creek," Barton said. Fourteen Mile/ Baker Creek meets the Big Black River, eventually sending its waters to the Gulf of Mexico. "There are no more worthwhile expenditure of funds than the CSP and EQIP programs. They protect our waters. They are a solution to the pollution problems."

Barton uses no-till practices, allowing him to keep soil from eroding. This practice has led him to better yields and healthier soil, he said.

"Since I've started using these programs, the farm has been more productive," he said.

NRCS programs have helped Barton in managing nutrients, pests and soils. The agency has supplied Barton with recommendations from yearly soil tests and promoted practices like soil testing, split nitrogen application and precision farming applied to enhanced nutrient management activities.

Barton uses low or very low risk chemicals at low rates in spot spray, and he uses a rotating crop system that aims to break the cycle of pests. Barton also uses practices and measures such as pest scouting and integrated pest management to diffuse impacts from pests.

Additionally, Barton enhances soil by limiting machine traffic, which causes compaction, and implementing conservation measures that improve soil conditions.

"David is truly a steward of the land,"



Top: Five generations of the Barton family have worked on this central Mississippi farm. Pictured are (back row) Dan Harris, Annabelle Barton, Roxane Barton, David Barton Jr., David Kemp Barton, (front row) David Barton, Sydney Barton, Chloe Barton, Martha Barton and State Conservationist Al Garner. Bottom: David Barton (from left) and his two partners, David and Dan Harris, monitor a wheat field at Canaan Plantation in Raymond, Miss.



State Conservationist Al Garner said. "He has led the way and is a model to show how we can help our lands."

Barton's farm has secured a handful of accolades over the years for his conservation practices. And he has also done an excellent job at sharing his farm with others, said Lynn Porter, information and education specialist with the Hinds County Soil & Water Conservation District.

"He always opened the door for meetings, especially for teachers," Porter said of Barton, who is one of the commissioners on the Hinds County Soil and Water Conservation District. "He has exposed thousands of people to agriculture over the years."

Helping the People Help the Land

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