

SPECIAL PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS 2004 – 2011

2004-2005 Special Projects

Castille: Multi-State Master Farmer Initiative

The Master Farmer program is an effort to demonstrate that agricultural producers can voluntarily reduce the impact that agricultural production has on the environment while remaining economically viable through the adoption of research-based conservation practices. The *Master Farmer Program* is implemented by the LSU AgCenter and partners with the Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Louisiana Cattlemen's Association, and the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry.

The watershed specific program is divided into three phases, and a participating farmer must complete all three to become a certified master farmer. Phase one consists of environmental and BMP education, including an eight-hour session of classroom lectures. Phase two consists of "model farm" visits, where enrolled farmers visit sites in their watershed where BMPs have been implemented and the farm managers have completed the training. The third phase is the development and implementation of site-specific conservation plans including the implementation of BMPs at a cost-effective level. To date, there are over 1150 producers enrolled in the program.

Hairston & Brantley: Southern Watershed Education Network: Watershed Professionals Sub-Committee

Extension water quality programs for watershed professionals are currently being conducted by many states in the southern region. Identification of expertise in trainings and program coordination need to be improved. A template needs to be created so that workshops may be more easily reproduced in states where there is interest. The Watershed Education Network will be the premier program for watershed materials, outreach and education and training programs for watershed professionals.

The Watershed Professionals Sub-Committee will provide a framework for workshop coordination and easily reproducible templates for watershed education programs targeted to watershed professionals. The target audience referred to as watershed professionals includes-Extension Agents, Watershed Action Groups, Industry Representatives, and State, Local, and Federal Agency Representative

The goal is to coordinate watershed education activities that target natural resource professionals in the southern region. Improve transfer of lessons learned between states to improve watershed education programs and activities.