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\$50,000 Available for Grazing Pilot in Alabama's Black Belt Counties

AUBURN, December 20, 2016 – USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) State Conservationist for Alabama Ben Malone announced a renewal of a pilot program that targets small, underserved livestock operations in the Black Belt region. The grazing pilot, which is funded under the [Environmental Quality Incentives Program \(EQIP\)](#) will target producers in the following [StrikeForce](#) counties: Dallas, Wilcox, Marengo, Hale and Perry. Through StrikeForce, NRCS is working with more farmers and ranchers than ever in communities that face persistent poverty.

The pilot project is a joint effort between NRCS and The United Christian Community Association (TUCCA), a local community based organization that has identified specific conservation needs for livestock producers in the area. TUCCA has received a 2501 grant to provide hands on technical assistance to eligible farmers. Through this project, NRCS and the association will work with livestock producers on implementing conservation practices that will improve forage quality and quantity and reduce soil erosion through rotational grazing planning.

State Conservationist Ben Malone said, “The success of this effort will not be in the number that apply but it will be measured in the number of producers that achieve an improved resource base, improved income and land retention.”

Eligible livestock producers are encouraged to visit their [local USDA Service Center](#) to sign up by January 20, 2017.

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