



# NEWSLETTER

June 2018

*On The  
Road Again!*





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The Louisiana GLCI Newsletter is distributed quarterly by email.

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LGLCI

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## On the Cover



The Louisiana GLCI hit the road for their second annual bus tour, this time to cattle farms in Louisiana and Mississippi. Find out what the travelers learned along the way.



# On the Road Again!

**May 9th - 11th, 2018  
Louisiana Farms Bus Tour**

Clear skies, an open road, and sustainable ag education is what a bus full of travelers experienced on the 2018 LGLCI Louisiana Farms Bus Tour.

For three days travelers visited five cattle farms in Louisiana and one in Mississippi. At each stop the owners of the farm explained how each of them managed their operation. One of those stops included Hunt Hill Cattle Co., owned and operated by Cooper and his wife Katie Hurst of Woodville, MS.



Travelers touring Ted Miller's farm, Delta Dairy LLC, in Baskin, LA.

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“Regenerative Ag is in essence of what it is,” Hurst said about his farm management. “We are building our soils and building the resiliency and improving our water infiltration.”

At this stop, Hurst explained their top three focuses are stockmanship, high density grazing, and soil health. “We can’t make it rain, but we can control how much runs off and how much is absorbed by the ground. And that entails all the soil life that’s under the surface to create our own fertility in essence – in order to reduce inputs and make us financially viable.”

He’s not the only farmer on the tour who practices regenerative ag. In fact, every stop on the tour was a regenerative farm, including Cliff Vining’s farm in Pioneer, LA. Vining said, “The human species is one of the few species that does not learn mistakes made by past generations.”

Cliff said by spreading the knowledge of how the ecosystem works for the farmer, he hopes he can save some people from making the same mistakes he did. He encourages other farmers to “pay attention to what you see and look at things and figure out why things are that way and why they’re that way.”

Cliff along with the other farmers who presented on the tour haven’t always farmed this way. In fact, Hurst said it’s been a long journey to get where he is today. He explained years ago, he farmed traditionally and did whatever they were told to do. He said, “We always knew forage was the cheapest way to feed a cow and we practiced rotational grazing, but we used a lot of inputs that were maybe viable early on when they were cheap, but as they’ve gotten more expensive we knew we had to find a way to be sustainable, and then in fact regenerative.”

He explained he and Katie started reading books and articles and attending seminars about ten years ago to learn more about the farming they love today. “The interesting thing was that they were a management change, a paradigm shift that did not cost us anything. Financially, in terms of input expenditures, it was a win-win.”

Louisiana GLCI Coordinator Taylor Frey said the LGLCI hosts trips and events like this one, to not only inform veteran grazers but also upcoming grazers, like Macauley White from Baton Rouge. White said, “It’s made me realize there’s no short cut to healthy soil, and no short cut to healthy cows.”



Cooper Hurst teaching attendees about his cattle operation.



Pictured left to right: Top: Vernon Fuselier, David Mills, Raymond Parks, Cooper Hurst, Katie Hurst, Mary Mills, Chris Ebel, Lori Hessel, David Hessel, Tom Lester, Joan Lester, Sam Cashio, Joy Womack, Vic Womack, Brandon Breaux, Benny Fontenot, David Daigle, Rickey Womack, Hugh Soape, Layne Landreneau, Benny Landreneau, Dale Reed, Stuart Gardner, Taylor Frey, Francis Pugh, Macauley White.



# HIGHLIGHTS

## June 2nd, 2018 Tom Lester Pasture Walk

On June 2nd, the LGLCI hosted a pasture walk at Tom and Joan Lester's farm in DeRidder, LA. Participants toured the Lester's farm which included demonstrations of grazing sunn hemp, summer legumes, and silvopasture. Participants also learned about rotational grazing, saw how the Lester's control



weeds with their weed wiper, toured their cattle handling facilities, and viewed the Calcasieu Soil and Water Conservation District's new no-till drill.

The group also enjoyed a presentation by Roundstone Native seed and had lunch on the farm prepared by Joan.

The Lesters have raised cattle for four years in DeRidder, LA. Tom said, "We farm because of the love we have for the land." He says he hopes to continue to improve his operation by learning from other people.

LGLCI Chairman David Daigle attended the pasture walk and said it was one of the finest pasture walks he'd attended. He said, "It's (the Lester's farm) a model farm, for sure."



A picture of the Lester's weed wiper.



## May 26th, 2018 Forage for Profit Seminar

Dr. Don Ball, Professor Emeritus of Auburn University and Dr. Garry Lacefield, Professor Emeritus of University of Kentucky are a dynamic duo when it comes to teaching on forage. On May 26th at the LSU Southeast Research Station in Franklinton, LA, the two presented on livestock management, species and variety selection, soil fertility and nutrient cycling, use of legumes and grazing management.



Ameilia Kent presenting on how she manages her farm.

At this workshop, participants also heard from experienced producers like Ameilia Kent, Sarah and Donald Bailly, Brendon Terry, and Donald Ashford.



Pictured left to right: Dr. Garry Lacefield, Wedge Barthe, Dr. Mike McCormick and Dr. Don Ball.

## April 20th, 2018 Coastal Prairie Burn Workshop

To help land managers understand the benefits of prescribed fire on grasslands, the Louisiana GLCI hosted a Coastal Prairie Prescribed Burn Workshop on April 20, 2018. The workshop was held on the Gray Ranch, south of Vinton, Louisiana. The event was well attended by people with a variety of interests, from livestock producers to ecologists and native prairie plant and wildlife enthusiasts.

Attendees heard from Dr. Chris Reid with LSU, who spoke about the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries native prairie restoration project on the site and the use of prescribed fire as a tool. He explained that most grasslands evolved with periodic burning and that fire is an essential part of native grassland ecosystems. To get a livestock producer's perspective on the benefits of prescribed burning the group heard from Jay Duhon, Conner Hayes and Dave Daigle, who raise cattle on area pastures. They stressed that forage quality is improved, and invasive woody plants are suppressed with prescribed fire. Dr. Larry Allain added a wildlife element to the workshop by explaining how controlled burning can be used to benefit various wildlife species such as waterfowl, quail and numerous other grassland birds. The workshop finished up with a prescribed burn demonstration.





# HIGHLIGHTS

**April 20th, 2018**  
**Mob Grazing Workshop**  
**By: Taylor Frey**

**W**orld-renowned mob-grazing specialist Ian Mitchel-Innes likes to say, “Energy is money, money is energy, time is money, and water is money.” That’s the message he presented to fifteen Louisiana cattle producers at the Mob-Grazing workshop hosted by the Louisiana Grazing Lands Coalition and Brookshire Farm in April.

Innes encourages producers to use the free energy they receive from the sun to make their farm more profitable. He says, “Land is a solar panel. Farmers need to harvest energy from the sun, use that energy through cattle to get a product to sell and make money.”

One year ago, the Blanchets, who raise 100% grass fed beef, hired Innes as a consultant for their farm. Since then, they have seen major improvements on their land. The Blanchets say, “We were able to graze permanent pastures longer into the fall and had a shorter hay supplementation time than our neighbors. This spring, we are able to get fattening gains on those pastures with a 16% increase in our stocking rate.” The biggest change they’ve applied to their farm is putting more hooves on smaller areas for shorter times. “We accomplished that by combining all classes of cattle into one herd. Initially, we divided the farm for a 48 day rest period. The grass is growing fast enough now, spring 2018, that we’ve reduced that to a 21 day rest period.” “People who are grazing the normal two acres per cow in Louisiana could probably do one acre or half an acre per cow and you would have more forage than you did previously,” according to Bob Blanchet.

Tara Morris, cattle producer in St. Francisville, LA said she’s grateful for the people she connected with at the workshop. She also said, “I really enjoyed learning about how to quickly improve poor pasture with the techniques that Ian uses of high density mob grazing.” She said, “If we stumble across a piece of land that needs some quick improvement, I know how to do it now.”

You can follow Brookshire Farm on Facebook, Brookshire Farm in Meaux, LA.





# UPCOMING EVENTS:



**June 27th, 2018**  
**Sustainable Pasture Management**  
**Pasture Walk - Pioneer, LA**

The Louisiana GLCI is hosting a pasture walk on June 27th, 2018. Cliff Vining is a cattleman and grass farmer in Pioneer, LA. At this pasture walk at Cliff's farm, he and other ag professionals will demonstrate how to use rye grass and early clover as a cover crop. They will also discuss the reseeding ability of the forage in the pasture. To pre-register for this event go to [louisianaglci.org/registration](http://louisianaglci.org/registration) or call Taylor Frey at 225-240-3376.

**June 12, 2018**  
**LSU AgCenter Market Ready**  
**Workshop - Alexandria**

The LSU AgCenter will be hosting a Market Ready Workshop from 8:30 am - 2:30 pm, on June 12, 2018, in Alexandria, Louisiana. The focus of this workshop is to assist local food producers in establishing a business strategy and effectively market to local restaurants and schools, as well as grocers and wholesalers. Registration is FREE, but participants are required to register via Eventbrite. For more information or to register, visit [www.lsuagcenter.com/louisianamarketready](http://www.lsuagcenter.com/louisianamarketready) or by contacting Alessandro Holzapfel at [aholzapfel@agcenter.lsu.edu](mailto:aholzapfel@agcenter.lsu.edu) or by phone at 225-578-2701.

**June 13, 2018**  
**LSU AgCenter Market Ready**  
**Workshop - Lafayette**

The LSU AgCenter will be hosting a Market Ready Workshop from 8:30 am - 2:30 pm, on June 13, 2018, in Lafayette, Louisiana. The focus of this workshop is to assist local food producers in establishing a business strategy and effectively market to local restaurants and schools, as well as grocers and wholesalers. Registration is FREE, but participants are required to register via Eventbrite. For more information or to register visit, [www.lsuagcenter.com/louisianamarketready](http://www.lsuagcenter.com/louisianamarketready) or by contacting Alessandro Holzapfel at [aholzapfel@agcenter.lsu.edu](mailto:aholzapfel@agcenter.lsu.edu) or by phone at 225-578-2701.

**June 14, 2018**  
**Soil Health in Grazed Longleaf Pine Savannah**

The Louisiana GLCI is hosting a soil health in grazed longleaf pine savannah workshop on June 14, 2018, from 9:00 am - 2:30 pm at the Family Place Church on Emma Street in Reeves, Louisiana. Registration is closed and full. We are looking forward to this event!

**June 19, 2018**  
**LSU AgCenter Crop Production and Pest Management**  
**Field Day Expo**

The LSU AgCenter is hosting a Crop Production and Pest Management Field Day Expo on June 19, 2018, at the Macon Ridge Research Station in Winnsboro, Louisiana. Please contact Dr. Tara Smith at 318-435-2903 for more information.

**June 20, 2018**  
**LSU AgCenter Market Ready Workshop - Hammond**

The LSU AgCenter will be hosting a Market Ready Workshop from 8:30 am - 2:30 pm, on June 20, 2018, in Hammond, Louisiana. The focus of this workshop is to assist local food producers in establishing a business strategy and effectively market to local restaurants and schools, as well as grocers and wholesalers. Registration is FREE, but participants are required to register via Eventbrite. For more information or to register visit, [www.lsuagcenter.com/louisianamarketready](http://www.lsuagcenter.com/louisianamarketready) or by contacting Alessandro Holzapfel at [aholzapfel@agcenter.lsu.edu](mailto:aholzapfel@agcenter.lsu.edu) or by phone at 225-578-2701.