

OUR EXPERIENCE WITH THE FIELDPRINT PLATFORM**Rachel Lee****Consultant with Jordan Associates****Winnsboro, LA****Kellon Lee****Producer****Saint Joseph, LA****Abstract**

Over the last several years, sustainability has become a hot topic for agriculture industry. The Field Print Platform (FPP) was developed by the Field to Market Coalition for Sustainable Agriculture for cotton, rice, soybeans, corn, wheat, potatoes and alfalfa farmers. In its National Indicator's Report, Field to Market published significant improvements of US Cotton over the last 35 years in reducing the impact of key metrics such as soil loss, irrigation water use efficiency, greenhouse gas and others. In setting the stage for the next decade, the US Cotton industry set further goals for continual improvement. They are by 2025: reduce land use by 13% per pound fiber, increase fiber per gallon of water 18%, reduce greenhouse gas emissions 39%, reduce energy 15%, reduce soil loss 50%, and increase soil carbon 30%. By continuing to improve on key metrics the cotton industry will reduce its environmental footprint to a fraction of past results. In 2016 the Louisiana Cotton Sustainability Pilot Project was created as a joint project of the National Cotton Organizations, NRCS, Louisiana Cotton and Grain Association, Louisiana Farm Bureau and Louisiana State University. The Louisiana Cotton Sustainability Pilot Project is a multi-year study that utilizes the FPP to assess management practices and natural resource conservation for Louisiana cotton producers.

Rachel Lee, the NRCS and Louisiana Cotton Sustainability Pilot Project specialist, discusses the results of the pilot project: land use, energy use, irrigation water use, greenhouse gas emissions, soil carbon, runoff water quality, and soil loss data on more than 45 fields in 2017. The project includes fields of diverse production practices, a variety of soils and varying inputs and provides understandings into how the tool can be used by farmers to assess their own field's performance. She also discusses how if the fields were representative of the US, how the Louisiana Pilot Project results stand compared to the US average and the 2025 US Sustainability goals. Rachel describes how at a farmers' discretion; the results can be aggregated with those of other cotton farmers and shared with the supply chain to meet the increasing need for transparent evidence of responsible production practices.

Kellon Lee, producer, reviews two fields from his operation that were entered in the FPP. He discusses how the conventional tillage on his operation resulted in high soil loss. He utilizes the FPP to run different tillage scenarios to see how reduced till, strip-till, and no till impacted the soil loss and organic matter on his operation. Kellon also provides a farmer's viewpoint on practical aspects of using the tools and implementing best management practices. He provides insight to how the FPP allows him to run different conservation scenarios to see the impact it will have on his operation before investing time and money into a practice.

The cotton export market has received many requests for sustainably grown cotton and the NRCS and Louisiana Cotton Sustainability Pilot Project is one way the industry is trying meet these needs. Supply chain participants can use Field to Market to set their corporate Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The NRCS and Louisiana Cotton Sustainability Project also helps producers with transparency from a public perception.