

Look how time flies. The year 2011 is almost over, and the holiday season is upon us. The Thanksgiving holiday brings a time where families can get together and reminisce about the good old days, and young and old can look into one another's eyes and see a bright future and remember the glorious past. In this week's article, your county agent is extremely thankful for life as well as it is. I often think about the highs and the lows and everything in between, but nothing compares to having a wonderful family and truly good friends, not to mention enjoying a great thanksgiving meal. I could go on and on about my family and how thankful I am for them, but I would like to tell you about my other family and that is the Oconee County agricultural producers.

Here in Oconee County, our local farmers provide an abundance of agricultural products that benefit all of us in some form or fashion. Let it be known that we must be thankful for they who toil the land to bring forth a bountiful harvest. Our Farmers in Oconee County are great at dealing with adversity, persevering through the good and the bad, always being eternal optimists and hoping that tomorrow will be a brighter and better day ahead. Farmers most of the time go unnoticed and unappreciated for the work they do. These special men and women remain rock steady year after year and time after time, farming so we can eat. On this occasion, I want to give you a little insight on why we should be thankful. A lot of us only see the end product—what's on the dinner table—and do not see the day-to-day work that's involved to get the quality food we enjoy.

I want to say thank you to our famers who get up in middle of the night to roam the pastures to check cows giving birth to calves. Thank you for having faith in planting seeds in your pastures when the rain was only a slim possibility. Thank you for fighting the army worms so that the cattle could have grass and hay eat. Thank you for enduring the elements when everyone else is warm and cozy. Thank you for hanging in their when the input costs are continuing to go up and less money is put in your pocket. Thank you for purchasing the feed when you knew you were over budget. Thank you for not giving up when the hay baler quit working. Thank you for enduring the drought; you keep holding on. Thank you for sharing your passion and talent with a new generation so that the work of a farmer is passed on. Sincere thanks goes to you and your families for sacrificing your time, energy, financial resources, and peace of mind so that many others can have quality food to eat.

Wherever you are on Thanksgiving Day, and if you are at the dinner table surrounded by family and friends holding hands saying grace and giving thanks, please continue to give thanks and ask God to continue the bless the farmers across this great country of ours.

What is a county agent thankful for? Well, there are many things I can name to say that I'm thankful for.

Farmers!