



#FridaysOnTheFarm: Veteran Farmer Keeps Serving Others

From the kitchen table to the boardroom table, USDA brings people together across the nation for: healthier food, natural resources, and people; a stronger agricultural industry; and economic growth, jobs, and innovation.

Each Friday, meet those farmers, producers, and landowners through our [#FridaysOnTheFarm](#) stories. Visit local farms, ranches, forests, and resource areas where USDA customers and partners do right and feed everyone.

This week, we travel to Milledgeville, Georgia, where Jon Jackson – a former Army Ranger – is furthering his post-military mission of service through agriculture.

A Life Driven by Mission

Growing up in New Jersey, Jon Jackson was accustomed to the sights and sounds of big city living. The son of a man who loved gardening, Jon often found sanctuary and a quiet focus while spending time in his family's fruit and vegetable beds.

Jon later joined the United States Army, where he earned a spot among some of the best that our military has to offer as part of the Army Rangers. After years of service – including six combat deployments – he returned home.

Though he was happy to be back, Jon's time in combat left its mark.

"I am a veteran with invisible wounds, living with Post Traumatic Stress and Traumatic Brain Injury sustained in combat." – Jon Jackson

Jon tried multiple methods for finding inner peace post-war. One activity gave Jon something that he wasn't getting elsewhere – farming. Like many veteran farmers, Jon discovered that he was happiest when he was working the land and nurturing the soil.

"As a one hundred percent disabled vet transitioning into post-military living, I was looking for my place in the world. Nothing spoke to me, except growing food." – Jon Jackson

Jon learned a lot about the many different resources available to veterans like himself, but he also discovered gaps that often left him frustrated.

He knew he wasn't alone, so he began preparing for a new mission – helping veterans and beginning farmers who need it the most.



A New Chapter

Comfort Farms is in central Georgia, just outside the city of Milledgeville. It's a therapeutic and training agricultural facility that is named in honor of US Army Ranger Captain Kyle A. Comfort, who was killed in action in 2010. According to Jackson, it's the nation's first Acute Veterans Crisis Agriculture Center and is "a healing farm for veterans."

The farm was started in 2016 as part of a partnership with a private landowner interested in Jackson's vision.

Equipped with the planning mindset he developed in the military, Jackson has spent the last few years strategically cultivating the land, relationships, and resources.

"The first thing I did was call USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service and have them look at our whole landscape," Jon says. "They gave me a lot of advice, based on my current objectives and long-term goals."

Thanks to a tremendous amount of effort and dozens of volunteers, as well as some generous donations from private companies, the farm was soon producing fruits, vegetables, and high-quality pork.

Within the first 11 months of operation, Comfort Farms helped provide crisis services for 20 veterans and helped educate over 500 veterans about the business and science of running a farm and agribusiness. Through Jon's leadership, the facility assists with business planning, marketing, accounting, food safety, labeling, and meeting customer packaging specifications. Jon applauds the vast support services offered by USDA to help veterans and other beginning farmers get started and produce more efficiently.

"I'm really happy to partner with the USDA, FSA, and NRCS – all these groups that know these people directly – because they are a resource for the vets and the community." – Jon Jackson

A Holistic Look Ahead

Jon's approach to healing veterans in crisis – or those simply interested in farming – is built by instilling hope and strength through community. This ground-up approach can be seen across Comfort Farms as well. With a focus on soil health, improving available forage, and water access and use, Jon is creating a balanced operation that offers balance for others.



Comfort Farms has one driving vision: “A world where transformed veterans serve self, team, and community through nourishing the land, stimulating the economy, and expanding the availability of quality food.”

USDA is honored to be a small part of this noble operation.

More Information

USDA offers a variety of risk management, disaster, loan, and conservation programs to help agricultural producers build resiliency and weather ups and downs in the market. Visit farmers.gov to learn more.

For more information about USDA services, contact your local [USDA service center](#).

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