



#FridaysOnTheFarm: Rehabilitating the Ranch

Each Friday meet 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 meet Jason Berlowitz, a cattle rancher from Cushing, Oklahoma. Surrounded by the Cimarron River, his 1,800-acre operation was severely impacted by record-breaking floods in the spring of 2019.

Record-Breaking Floods

No one could have prepared for the rain that kept falling in May 2019. Every county in Oklahoma was under a state of emergency because of the flooding and severe storms.

When the flooding began, sand and silt deposits washed over Jason's ranch, causing him to lose 435 acres of land and most of his fencing.

"I spread out all of my cattle over the three plots, but right now I can't do that," Jason stated. "I've got too many cattle in one place and I'm way overstocked on one field."

With his land near the river, Jason's ranch has flooded before, but never this severely. In his 25 years of production, he had never seen so much sand piled up in one area

"We've had this area flood before, but there's just so much silt covering the land that I can't even begin to think about clearing it until it's all dry. That could take six months, assuming it doesn't rain at all after this."

Hope for the Future

To help with the costs of fence repair and clearing the sand and silt from his land, Jason is enrolled in the [Emergency Conservation Program](#), offered by USDA's [Farm Service Agency](#).

This program helps farmers and ranchers repair damage to farmland caused by natural disasters, like flooding or drought, through funding and assistance for repairs or installation of water conservation methods.

Natural disasters can devastate farmland and grazing land and threaten the livelihood of farmers and ranchers who depend on the land on which they live. The Emergency Conservation Program can help to lessen this burden, providing assistance in overcoming exceptional damage from storms and severe drought.



Jason managed to keep up his good spirits despite the daunting task of rehabilitating his land, jokingly asking many times, “Where am I going to put all this sand?”

More Information

USDA offers a variety of risk management, disaster assistance, loan, and conservation programs to help agricultural producers in the United States weather ups and downs in the market and recover from natural disasters as well as invest in improvements to their operations. [Learn about additional programs.](#)

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

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