

# Florida Cattle Best Management Practices

UF | IFAS Extension  
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

In partnership with



**Florida ranchers work with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) that reduce nitrogen and phosphorus loads in water leaving their properties.**

As of 2017, nearly  
**11,000**  
individual BMP projects had  
been implemented since the  
program began in 2005.

Over  
**5 million**  
acres of Florida agricultural  
land are enrolled in BMP programs.

Over **80%** (1,926,000 acres)  
of the agricultural lands within the  
Lake Okeechobee watershed are currently enrolled  
in the Notice of Intent BMP program, and  
**325,000**  
acres have been enrolled in a  
BMP cost-share program.<sup>2</sup>

## Best Management Practices include:

- Maintaining adequate vegetative cover by adjusting stocking rates and using prescribed grazing systems. Well-established and managed forage stands effectively reduce soil erosion, absorb nutrients, and provide nutrition for livestock.
- Carefully planning watering and feeding sites.
- Carefully planning temporary holding areas.
- Using structural techniques to abate pollution.
- Minimizing offsite water discharges.
- Minimizing the potential for erosion.<sup>1</sup>

## The Value of Agricultural Research and Extension

It is estimated that every  
**\$1 invested**  
in agricultural research and Extension results in a  
**return of \$20**  
from increased productivity.<sup>3</sup>



**Source:** Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. 2017 Annual Report. <https://bit.ly/2EPQAG3>

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Water Quality Best Management Practices for Florida Cow/Calf Operations. 2008 Edition. <https://bit.ly/2H3XZ31>

<sup>2</sup>Soil and Water Engineering Technology, Inc. Estimation of Total Phosphorus & Nitrogen Loads Reductions Associated with FDACS Lake Okeechobee Cost-Share BMP Program. 2016. <https://bit.ly/2TzoyCB>

<sup>3</sup>Alston, J.M., Andersen, M.A., James, J.S., and Pardey, P.G. 2010. Persistence Pays: U.S. Agricultural Productivity Growth and the Benefits from Public R&D Spending. New York: Springer.

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