

Glasscocks Produce: A big farm production

Written by By Ava Barlow, Staff Writer
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June 16, 2011 - On Hunt County Road 1054 - in the old Orange Grove city limits - is a 44-acre farm with ten acres planted in garden and 34 in hay. The owners, Charles and Bess Glasscock, have been married since December 1956 and have two children, Steve and Shelly, both grown and on their own now. Early in 1966, a momentous year for the Glasscock family, Charles bought two acres of land where his father had farmed over 300 acres for most of Charles' life. Charles later inherited 42 acres from the estate of J. E. Glasscock, his father.



But in September of 1966, as a full time farmer, a farming accident left Charles badly injured on the right side of his shoulder, chest and arm. He was hospitalized for about three weeks to a month, which included the time he had to consent to having his arm amputated below the elbow.

All of Celeste turned out to visit the family during the early part of the crisis -with 144 people being there at one time. He was paralyzed for about four months on the right side, but the healing began and one day he asked for a pencil to write his name, and he never had a second thought about not being able to do anything ever again. A year after the accident, he was back farming in the same area where the accident had happened, on the same piece of equipment.

Bessie was working at the Love's factory in downtown Celeste and relays the information of Celeste coming to their aid and some others, too. Things were set in place before the accident for a house to be built on the two acres. Charles wanted to abandon the plans, but Mr. Sewell with the FHA loan entity would not let the plans be set aside and in February of 1967 building began, while Charles continued to heal.

Charles began farming as a five-year-old boy with a small sack, picking cotton with his dad's crews. At 13 years of age his father turned about two acres over to him to plant, fertilize and harvest and he could have the income from selling the cotton. He raised enough cotton in those

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two acres to make one bale of cotton, and he had enough confidence that he could grow anything he put his mind to.

At an even earlier age, eight, Charles was given a bull, also a gift from his father. By the time he graduated high school he had 30 head of cattle.

Bess worked at a store, a caf, and Love's factory, all in Celeste, and at the Leonard Nursing Home, while Charles continued to farm and work other jobs as well. At one time he had four jobs - Wal Mart, raising cattle, farming, and raising emus. But both retired from all other income and four years ago began Glasscock Produce. They harvest three days a week, sell three days a week, and rest on Sundays.

Pretty much everything he sets his mind to grow, will grow. Right now they are growing tomatoes by the bushels, squash, okra, purple hull peas, black eyed peas, blackberries, grapes, six types of peppers, cantaloupes, watermelon, pumpkin and zucchini. In the orchard are 14 varieties of peaches, four plum trees, four types of apples, pears and apricots. One of his peaches recently measured 12 and 1/8 inches around. They also harvest honey from six hives. They, like all other apiarist, maintain the hives, harvest the honey, and plan to enlarge their bee population and honey industry using parts from a 200-year-old method.

Glasscock's Produce is at the Leonard Community Farmers Market on Saturday mornings, at Celeste on Tuesday mornings and at Howe on Thursday mornings.

(CAPTION) Charles and Bess Glasscock work in the honey room, one of many things they offer through Glasscock's Produce. - Ava Barlow staff photo