NO-TILL ORGANIC MARKET GARDEN

Producer Case Study

Growing Abundance Through Stewardship

The Story of Anthony Pollard and Pollard Farms

Lincoln Parish, Louisiana



USDA United States Department of Agriculture

Natural Resources Conservation Service

NO-TILL OMG! Organically Managed Gardening

CAMPTI Field of DREAMS

Producer Profile

For Anthony Pollard, farming has always been about more than growing food.

Growing up in Oklahoma, Pollard learned the value of hard work and self-sufficiency through his family's garden. Every year, parents, siblings, and relatives worked together to produce food that would help sustain the family through the winter months. Those early experiences planted a lifelong appreciation for agriculture, stewardship, and the importance of sharing with others.

Today, Pollard serves his community as a City Marshal while raising livestock, growing vegetables, and sharing food with family, neighbors, and friends. Through Pollard Farms, he has created a place where agriculture, service, and community come together.

When Pollard joined the No-Till Organic Market Garden project, he saw an opportunity to improve his production system while expanding his ability to provide food for others. His long-term goal extended beyond the required quarter-acre demonstration plot. He envisioned growing enough food to support local families, food banks, and community members who might otherwise struggle to access fresh produce.

The property presented immediate challenges. The soil consisted largely of compacted clay, rock, and poor-quality fill material that limited plant growth and made even basic infrastructure difficult to install. Yet Pollard viewed these obstacles as opportunities to learn and experiment.

Drawing on both project training and his own observations, he began exploring ways to build healthier soil while reducing external inputs. The process would ultimately transform both the land and his understanding of regenerative agriculture.



"My daddy always said, 'You can't eat it all. You can't catch all the fish. You can't kill all the deer. Share the wealth.'" — Anthony Pollard

Learning Through Innovation

Anthony Pollard approached regenerative agriculture the same way he approaches public service: by observing problems, finding practical solutions, and continuously improving the system.

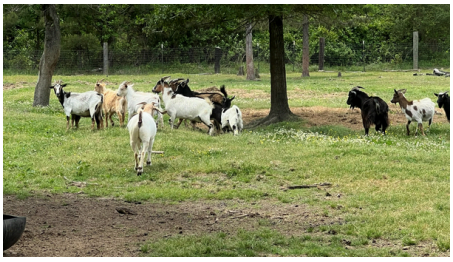
During the first year of the project, he used hay mulch to protect the soil and suppress weeds. While the practice provided some benefits, Pollard noticed that the soil beneath the mulch was not developing the biological activity he hoped to see. In particular, earthworms remained scarce.

Rather than accepting the results, he began experimenting.

Drawing on resources already available on the farm, Pollard developed a layered soil-building approach using livestock manure, cardboard, newspaper, leaves, and organic residues. With cattle, goats, pigs, chickens, and rabbits already integrated into the operation, he recognized an opportunity to recycle nutrients while reducing waste.

The results were encouraging. Soil became darker, richer, and more biologically active. Earthworms began to appear, indicating improvements in soil health and nutrient cycling. Crop performance improved significantly, particularly in areas receiving the highest levels of organic matter.

Pollard also learned the value of patience. Rather than searching for quick fixes, he focused on creating conditions that would allow biological processes to rebuild soil naturally over time.



Livestock integration and heavy mulch allow Pollard Farms to recycle nutrients on-site while building long-term soil fertility.

Key Findings

- Transformed compacted clay and rocky soil into productive growing areas
- Integrated livestock manure into a regenerative soil-building system
- Increased earthworm activity and visible biological life
- Improved soil structure, organic matter, and moisture retention
- Successfully produced high yields of cucumbers, zucchini, greens, and other vegetables
- Reduced reliance on purchased inputs through on-farm nutrient cycling





Building Healthy Soil



Healthy soil became the foundation of Pollard Farms' success. Instead of relying on intensive tillage, Pollard focused on feeding the soil and supporting biological activity. Layers of cardboard, newspaper, leaves, livestock manure, and organic residues gradually created a rich growing environment capable of supporting productive crops.

The approach reflected one of the central principles of regenerative agriculture: healthy soils are built from the ground up through biological processes.

As organic matter accumulated, the soil became easier to work and more resilient to weather extremes. Earthworms and other beneficial organisms increased, helping improve nutrient cycling and soil structure. Moisture retention improved, reducing stress on crops during periods of hot weather. The impact was visible in the harvest.



Areas receiving composted organic materials consistently produced healthier plants and larger yields. Cucumbers and zucchini performed exceptionally well, producing more food than Pollard initially anticipated.

The integration of livestock further strengthened the system. Manure from cattle, goats, pigs, chickens, and rabbits became a valuable resource rather than a waste product, helping close nutrient loops and support long-term soil fertility.

For Pollard, soil health is not an abstract concept. It is something that can be seen, measured, and experienced through healthier crops, improved productivity, and stronger connections between animals, plants, and people.

Growing a Farm and a Community

While Pollard Farms produces vegetables and livestock, its greatest impact may be the relationships it helps cultivate.

Anthony Pollard believes that food has the power to bring people together. Friends, neighbors, and community members frequently stop by the farm in search of fresh produce. More often than not, they leave with vegetables, advice, and encouragement. His philosophy is simple: if there is enough food to share, it should be shared.

Pollard regularly provides produce to neighbors and community members, viewing food not simply as a commodity but as a way to strengthen relationships and support those around him. This spirit of generosity has made him a valued resource within both the agricultural community and the broader region.

Farmer-to-farmer learning has also been an important part of his journey. Throughout the No-Till Organic Market Garden project, Pollard shared seeds, planting materials, and practical knowledge with fellow participants. His willingness to help others reflects a belief that stronger local food systems are built through cooperation rather than competition.

Beyond the farm, Pollard's work as a City Marshal reinforces many of the same values that guide his agricultural efforts: service, responsibility, and commitment to community well-being.

Whether mentoring a beginning farmer, sharing produce with a neighbor, or helping a fellow producer solve a problem, Pollard approaches agriculture as an opportunity to serve others. The result is a farm that nourishes both people and the community.

For Pollard, the journey does not end at harvest. As someone who enjoys cooking and sharing meals with family and friends, he views food as a way to bring people together and strengthen community connections.

"I have enough that I can feed a community."— Anthony Pollard







Looking Forward

Anthony Pollard's vision for the future extends beyond increasing production.



His goal is to continue expanding Pollard Farms while strengthening its ability to serve family, neighbors, and community organizations. He hopes to produce enough food to support local food banks and become a dependable source of fresh produce for those in need. He also hopes to pass the farm and its values to the next generation.

One of Pollard's greatest joys is watching his granddaughter explore the farm, interact with the animals, and participate in daily activities. Through those experiences, he sees the possibility of creating a lasting family legacy rooted in stewardship, hard work, and service.

Future plans include expanding regenerative practices, increasing food production, improving soil health, and continuing to integrate livestock and crop production into a resilient farming system.

Key Lessons Learned

- Healthy soil begins with organic matter and biological activity.
- Livestock can play an important role in nutrient cycling.
- Observation and experimentation lead to better management decisions.
- Abundance creates opportunities to serve others.
- Strong communities are built through generosity and cooperation.

Key Themes from Anthony's Journey

- Stewardship
- Soil Health
- Community Service
- Food Access
- Livestock Integration
- Family Legacy
- Generosity
- Regenerative Agriculture
- Farmer-to-Farmer Learning
- Local Food Systems

Closing Reflection

Anthony Pollard's story demonstrates that regenerative agriculture is about more than improving soil or increasing yields. It is about creating abundance and using that abundance to serve others. Through Pollard Farms, he has transformed challenging land into a productive system that feeds family, neighbors, and community members while building a foundation for future generations. His journey reminds us that some of agriculture's greatest rewards are not measured in pounds harvested or dollars earned, but in the relationships strengthened and opportunities created through a willingness to share the harvest.