

Jemy Hinton By: Leigh Anne Cason
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Talk about an influence in the agriculture industry! Jemy Hinton certainly is and will continue to be just that! Wife of Chip Hinton, mother of three and grandmother of six, is just the base of this extraordinary woman's life. Neither she, nor her husband, is what you'd consider a typical "farmer", but that has not stopped her from being an active member of the industry. She is an avid horseback rider, hiker and fisher(wo)man. She is also a self-declared, problem solver (though others would declare her this as well) and attributes this simple element to much of her success; despite the fact that she has a resume a mile long.

But before the impressive resume.... She got her start, growing up with chickens and eventually found herself becoming an active 4-H member. Though this is a modest foundation compared to others of her magnitude, it was still enough to instill in her a love of agriculture. Shortly thereafter, she began attending the University of Florida with the goal of becoming a veterinarian. However, with a growing family, her plans changed. She opted for a Bachelor of Science, in Natural Sciences, from Florida Southern College. She then became a Home Environment Specialist for the Hillsborough County Cooperative Extension Service. That last nine years. Then she moved to a position as a 4-H extension agent, also with the extension service, for an additional 4 years. Throughout her time with the extension, she; authored and co-authored, as array of publications, helped farmers (and homeowners alike) develop solutions to common problems and was an active 4-H agent. (conducting and assisting with a limitless amount of projects). While this may seem like a lifetime of work for some, Jemy continued on her path having

discovered a new objective. In her time with the extension service, she uncovered a great need for a link between the farmers and the regulation agencies.

Dealing with any agency that necessitates abundant guidelines and restrictions, can become cumbersome, overwhelming and confusing. Understandably, farmers run into this same problem with dealing with agencies such as the Florida department of Environmental Protection. Because of this, Mrs. Hinton joined the DEP's team as an Environmental Specialist and Agricultural Liaison. Her job was to assist framers with questions and concerns they may have regarding regulations. Her duty was not to enforce, but to genuinely help the farmer with any procedural implementation, troubleshooting dilemmas, or even just filling out necessary paperwork. She felt that her job was an important aspect of the industry due to all the new advancements and procedures that need to be adhered to. It is quite easy to get lost in all the mumbojumbo; easy enough to even put a farmer out of business. Not a good thought, but a fact. Jemy believes that with the help of people in positions like hers, and through proper education and training of the up and coming agriculture industry members (i.e. 4-H and FFA members), the future of agriculture has a hearty chance at life. Without these vital factors, it will just become more and more difficult for a farmer to farm.

Jemy Hinton has been given many opportunities to explore agriculture and has gained an infinite amount of knowledge relevant to the issues of our industry and the problems at hand. Of course the problems have changed a bit since her start, but they all have one common factor: the farmer. The farmer is the backbone of agriculture, along with, "atypical", farmers of the problem solving and devoted variety, like Jemy Hinton.

Update to the Jemy Hinton's History, as of August 2008

Jemy Hinton has spent most of her professional career working in agriculture for the University of Florida. She was the first employee to fill the biologist position at the "Strawberry Lab" in Dover working with Drs Albregts and Howard. She was later employed by the UF/Hillsborough County Cooperative Extension Service working with farmers and overseeing the Pesticide Safety Training and Testing programs.

Jemy made the change to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and continued to work with farmers as the DEP Southwest District's Agricultural Liaison for 10 years. In 2006, she jumped at the opportunity to further serve farmers in west central Florida with the newly created University of Florida Agricultural Best Management Practices Program.

Jemy continues to act as agricultural liaison between farmers and agencies.....especially the Florida Department of Ag and Consumer Services Office of Water Policy that is in charge of the statewide Water Quality and Water Quantity BMPs.