



## Steve Bradley: Bradley Farms *Taking Care of Your Neighbor*

Steve Bradley is right where he should be. As owner and operator of Bradley Farms, he is fulfilling a dream by working the land that he loves and helping others along the way.

Following the untimely deaths of his father and brother, Steve sold the real estate business they operated in Bessemer in 2002. He returned to the farm that had been in the family for 76 years to raise cattle and produce hay full-time. He took the money from the sale of the business to purchase his first two tractors from Cahaba Tractor. "The sweetest thing was seeing Cahaba Tractor pull up to the farm with those two tractors," said Steve. Today, there are six Kubota tractors in operation as well as many implements.

Two full-time employees, Nathan and Jodie, work with Steve along with other part-time help during the busy seasons. His son, Brad, helps out with maintenance on the tractors. Steve's wife, Julie, is also enlisted to assist when needed.

The 350 acre Bradley Farms is more than just a working farm. It is a gathering spot and place of solitude and enjoyment for the community. People come regularly to ride their horses and get away from the city. It is also home to the Birmingham Helicopter Modelers, who fly their remote control helicopters and airplanes almost every weekend at the farm. "This is what we should do, embrace the community and stay connected with people who live in the city. It gives them a place to come to and get away from all the hustle and bustle," Steve said.

Steve's connection with urbanites is a direct result of growing up in a community where everyone helps one another. "Taking care of your neighbor. That's what it's all about and that's exactly what I do with my customers, too," he stated. It is that very sentiment that keeps him connected to Cahaba Tractor. "Cahaba Tractor does business the same way I do," Steve added. "If you treat your customers right and show them that you truly appreciate them, they'll always come back."

That is what has kept the farm going strong for so long and allowed Steve the opportunity to get involved in other ventures, as well. He and a friend developed a cable support system for power companies that was sold several years ago. Steve is also a distributor for Chromalox, an industrial heat and temperature supplier. Under an arrangement with an alternative fuel organization, an ethanol testing plant is housed on a portion of his property. In his free time, he dabbles in photography.

With such a hectic schedule, Steve is happy to have a working relationship with Cahaba Tractor and their service department. "The thing I like about the service at Cahaba Tractor is that they'll try to help you fix an issue with just a phone call before having you bring your machine to them. It's not very often that I need to call them, because Kubota tractors just don't break often. It definitely saves me time and money from missing a day's work." Working with the staff at Cahaba Tractor is an added benefit. "They'll bend over backwards to help you out," he said. "That's the way I like to do business."

Steve loves to take the hands-on approach until, that is, it comes to his favorite toy on the farm, the Kubota 8540 complete with air-ride seat. "We call this 'The Boss's Tractor,'" joked Steve. "Nobody touches it, but me."

That seems to be the only thing that Steve keeps all to himself.