

Why improve the efficiency of your irrigation system?

For growers: improved irrigation efficiency can reduce expenses related to water and pumping, improve yield by ensuring appropriate water delivery throughout the field, reduce or eliminate water runoff, reduce nutrient inputs and improve top soil, and align practices with water quality regulations.

For the Basin: improved irrigation efficiency helps reduce the need for groundwater pumping therefore reducing groundwater overdraft, and protects coastal lands and wells from the effects of saltwater intrusion.

Irrigation resources currently available to Pajaro Valley growers

Irrigation system efficiency evaluations

Irrigation system efficiency evaluations are currently available to PVWMA customers through an NRCS grant. The grower pays only \$500 for this \$2000 service, and PVWMA will rebate participating growers an additional \$250. This means the grower gets a \$2000 value service for just \$250 after rebate.

Plus, if growers choose to implement recommendations resulting from the evaluation, they are eligible for another \$250 rebate. The rebate applies to equipment purchases of at least \$500 and certain requirements apply. Call PVWMA (722-9292) or the Ag Water Quality Coalition (475-5159) for details.

Irrigation System Efficiency Evaluations are confidential, and include:

- Assessment of system-wide pressure levels, water leaks, and the uniformity of water distribution;
- Results of the evaluation provided to and discussed only with the grower; and
- Recommendations for system improvements, and assistance with NRCS financial incentive programs if interested.

Program will expire Dec. 31, 2013, and a limited number of evaluations are available.

To schedule an evaluation, or find out more about the evaluation program, contact:

Central Coast Agricultural Water Quality Coalition

831 475-5159

Erin.agwater@gmail.com

NRCS EQIP Programs

Natural Resources Conservation Service, Environmental Quality Incentives Program

EQIP is a voluntary financial incentive program administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) that provides financial and technical assistance for approved conservation practices. To learn more about EQIP visit:

<http://www.ca.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip/index.html>

Natural Resources Conservation Service, National Organic Initiative:

This initiative assists producers with planning and implementing conservation practices that support environmentally sustainable organic practices. With the initiative, NRCS provides technical and financial assistance to eligible organic producers. For more information visit: http://www.ca.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip/2013/2013_national_organic_initiative.html

Natural Resources Conservation Service, National On-Farm Energy Initiative:

For fiscal year 2013, the National On-Farm Energy Initiative assists producers in two ways:

1. Identifies ways to conserve energy on their farms through an on-farm energy audit; and,
2. Provides assistance to implement recommended measures through the use of conservation practice standards. For more information visit:

http://www.ca.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip/2013/2013_on_farm_energy_initiative.html

For more information about NRCS programs contact your local NRCS office:

Santa Cruz County: 831 475-1967

Monterey County: 831 424-1036

Other resources for growers

Outreach and technical services for Spanish-speaking growers

The Resources Conservation District of Santa Cruz County currently provides outreach and technical support for Spanish-speaking growers in the Pajaro Valley. This grant is funded through the USDA Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers program.

For more information, contact:

Deborah Nares at the Resources Conservation District of Santa Cruz County

dnares@rcdsantacruz.org

831 464-2950

Soil moisture sensors for loan

Soil moisture sensors are available for loan to Pajaro Valley growers (with and without Hortau wireless network compatibility)

Regulatory Compliance

Assistance with understanding and meeting 2012 Ag Order requirements

Farm Water Quality Plans

Farm Water Quality Plan development (also meets a requirement of the 2012 Ag Order)

To take advantage of these programs, contact:

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