

DRIP IRRIGATION and WATER QUALITY WORKSHOP

Tuesday, March 14, 2006

At the

**Gobin Building** - Baggage Room  
105 South Main, Rocky Ford, CO

- 9:30 to 10.00 am      Registration
- 10:00 to 11:00 am      Dr. Tim Gates and Dr. Luis Garcia, Colorado State University  
Civil Engineering Department, Fort Collins, CO  
Assessing Benefits of Improved Irrigation Practices for Crop  
Productivity and Environmental Health Along the Arkansas River
- 11 to 11:15 am      Break
- 11:15 to 12:00 pm      Dr. Mike Bartolo, Colorado State University,  
Arkansas Valley Research Center, Rocky Ford, CO  
Nitrogen and Salinity Movement with Onions under Drip and  
Furrow Irrigation
- 12:00 to 12:30 pm      Lunch – Provided to Participants
- 12:30 to 1:45 pm      Round Table Discussion – Questions and Answers  
Eric Hanagan (Hanagan Farms), Matthew Proctor (Proctor Farms),  
Mike Bartolo (CSU-AVRC), Dave Miller (NRCS)  
Advantages and Disadvantages of Drip Irrigation
- 1:45to 2:00 pm      Break
- 2:00 to 2:45 pm      Dr. Abdel Berrada, Colorado State University,  
Arkansas Valley Research Center, Rocky Ford, CO  
Corn Response to Nitrogen and Manure Rates Under Drip and  
Furrow Irrigation with Special Emphasis on Salts and Nitrate  
Movement in the Soil
- 2:45 to 3:00 pm      Jim Valliant, Colorado State University Cooperative Extension,  
Rocky Ford, CO  
The Effect of AgriBlend (HYDROGEL and Zeolite) on Onion  
Demonstrations at the Hanagan and Proctor Farms and  
2005 Drip Irrigation Survey Results

Sponsored by Colorado State University and the Lower Arkansas Valley Water  
Conservancy District with Funding from an EPA 319 Education Grant and  
a NRCS Conservation Innovative Grant

## Press Release

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### **“Drip Irrigation and Water Quality Workshop”**

**Date: February 22, 2006**

**Jim Valliant, Regional Irrigation Specialist**

#### DRIP IRRIGATION AND WATER QUALITY WORKSHOP SEEKING SOLUTIONS TO THE “SILENT KILLER”—SALT

Salt, the “Silent Killer”, continues to stalk the Arkansas River Valley. Working with farmers, Colorado State University Civil Engineering, Agriculture Research and Cooperative Extension are seeking solutions to prevent the “death” of cropland. 10 to 20% of the cropland in the Valley is severely affected by salinity and about 200,000 acres are feeling the effects of salts with lower crop yields. Selenium is also affecting the quality of water in the Valley as a stretch of the river near the Kansas border has been declared selenium impaired.

Drip irrigation appears to be one way to improve water quality of the river by reducing runoff, erosion and deep percolation which carry salts, nitrates and selenium back to the river. Several farmers have invested in drip irrigation as a method of increasing yields and returns and saving water while improving the quality of water flowing back to the river. The Lower Arkansas Valley Water Conservancy District, working with CSU, reaches out to farmers through education in the development of economic strategies to help others interested in drip irrigation.

A Drip Irrigation and Water Quality Workshop will be held **Tuesday, March 14, 2006 at the Baggage Room of the Gobin Building at 105 South Main in Rocky Ford, beginning at 9:30 a.m. with registration.**

The Workshop will feature a Round Table discussion with farmers, scientists and government personnel speaking on their experiences with drip irrigation - where to get help - how to get started - what results to expect – what are the advantages and disadvantages. The discussion will be held following lunch at 12:30 p.m.

The Workshop group will include Eric Hanagan of Hanagan Farms, Matthew Proctor of Proctor Farms, Dave Miller of the NRCS, and Mike Bartolo of CSU as well as the morning speakers, Tim Gates and Luis Garcia of CSU.

Drs. Tim Gates and Luis Garcia of Colorado State University Civil Engineering Department have been conducting studies in areas of the Arkansas River above and below John Martin Reservoir for the past eight years and are looking for ways, with the use of computer modeling, to combat the “Silent Killer”. A large amount of information

on the quality and quantities of the river water as well as ground water has been collected to form a basis for the model. They will report on the benefits of improved irrigation practices on crop production and water quality.

Drs. Mike Bartolo and Abdel Berrada of the Colorado State University Arkansas Valley Research Center in Rocky Ford will report on their work with onions and corn where they have been studying the effect of drip irrigation on the movement of nitrates, salts and selenium in the soil as compared to furrow irrigation, the most prevalent method of irrigation in the Valley. Jim Valliant of Cooperative Extension will report on the results of drip irrigation demonstrations on the Hanagan Farms and Proctor Farms.

The Hanagan Farms grow several different crops of vegetables, melons, corn, and alfalfa as well as small grains. The Hanagan Farms have been using drip irrigation for the past four years and have expanded their acreage each year using different types of spacing and depth of drip lines and different supply lines. Proctor Farms have been using drip irrigation for the last two seasons growing melons and onions as well as small grains. Both Hanagan and Proctor Farms have been working with Jim Valliant on a 319 Grant project. The NRCS has been aiding those interested in drip irrigation with technical services and with conservation planning on farming operations.

Registration will start at 9:30 a.m., with presentations beginning at 10:00 a.m. The group will be served lunch at noon, which will be catered by Christine's Dinning. The program will conclude at 3:00 p.m.

This workshop is being sponsored by the Lower Arkansas Valley Water Conservancy District and Colorado State University with grants from the EPA and NRCS. All interested persons are invited to attend this information workshop on drip irrigation and water quality in the Arkansas River Valley.

***For more information, please contact the Otero Cooperative Extension Office by calling 719-254-7608 or Kim Chavez, LAVWCD, at 719-254-5155.***