

Irrigation Field Day set for Sept. 22 near Iliff

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

Colorado State University (CSU) is hosting a Limited Irrigation Field Day Tuesday, Sept. 22 from 10 a.m. to noon one mile east of Iliff. This field day is open to all interested in learning more about practical research information regarding farming with limited irrigation resources. The research is sponsored by CSU and Parker Water and Sanitation District. The Lower South Platte Irrigation Research and Demonstration Project is now in its third year of study.

This research and education project addresses the agronomic and economic tools needed for maximizing the efficient use of water resources in irrigated agriculture. The project focuses on limited irrigation technologies for crops such as corn, wheat, sugarbeet and alfalfa. Additional projects focus on water use by alfalfa and grass hay crops and alternative crops like canola.

Researchers are collaborating with local farmers to evaluate approaches to water conservation such as alternative crop rotation, irrigation scheduling, timing and management and crop residue management. Detailed water budgets are being assessed to document the potential water savings from a range in cropping approaches. Economic evaluations included both farm scale profitability analysis as well as projecting economic impacts at community, region and basin scales for different scenarios of climate and water allocation.

The program includes field plot tours with researchers showing their work on limited water cropping systems. Annual field crops shown in the research include corn, sugarbeet, canola, wheat and soybean. Two perennial crops are being studied as well: alfalfa and 15 grass species and varieties. A talk is included on the CSU weather station and public access to current data.