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## ***News Release***

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### ***EARTH DAY RELEASE***

#### **New Agricultural Water and Energy Savings Technology Previewed on Earth Day**

ALBUQUERQUE, NM-This Earth Day the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is offering a sneak preview of its new agricultural water and energy savings technical assistance to New Mexico farmers and ranchers. Called irrigation water management, the technical assistance brings together a wealth of conservation factors that can affect how much irrigation water and energy a farmer uses and, consequently, the bottom-line of that farm.

“The price of corn, wheat, and other products are rising, but so is energy, fertilizer, and other production costs,” said George Chavez, NRCS state resource conservationist. “Our job is to bring the best conservation technology to our farmers and ranchers without doing away with profitability or production.”

The irrigation water management technical assistance NRCS is previewing includes understanding of site-specific field conditions. The analysis searches for the best conservation of surface and ground water supplies, protection of surface and ground water quality, and substantial reduction in irrigation labor costs. Of extreme importance is significant increase in irrigation application efficiencies – that is increased yield for the same amount of water. An outcome that is sought as part of the process is reduction of pumping (energy) costs.

NRCS New Mexico reports its staff will be gearing up throughout the summer to provide the latest information in irrigation water management analysis. A preview of the new irrigation water management information can be found at [www.nm.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nm.nrcs.usda.gov) The agency is also offering some energy estimators that can be used to help give calculations of energy savings with various tillage and irrigation management practices at <http://energytools.sc.egov.usda.gov>

“The dedication of New Mexico farmers to conservation and their community as a whole is truly remarkable,” said Chavez. “This Earth Day is finding NRCS providing more conservation information than ever about such practices as no-till, irrigation water management, grazing management, and brush management. The work we are doing in irrigation water management is particularly timely because the profit margin on the farm is getting really tight, and we want to make every drop of water count.”

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