



Natural Resources Conservation Service  
6200 Jefferson NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87109

---

**NEWS RELEASE**

January 3, 2005

Contact: Barbara Garrett, public affairs specialist  
(505)761-4406

**Early Research May Aid Ogallala, Dairies**

ALBUQUERQUE, NM – The USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and New Mexico State University (NMSU) Agricultural Science Center at Clovis are excited and encouraged by early results of research into how to conserve water and meet the growing dairy forage market at the same time. Their two-pronged effort is on the cutting edge of meeting farmers' needs in eastern New Mexico.

Mike Sporcic, NRCS agronomist, is working with Sangu Angadi, NMSU Assistant Profession at the Clovis Agricultural Science Center to explore cropping systems that will both conserve water and yield high protein forage. What they have learned so far is that it is possible to get high protein sorghums through breeding so dairies can reduce protein and feed supplements to produce high quality milk.

Sporcic is now proposing to integrate minimum or no tillage systems into the growing of the sorghum.

“We think we can reduce water consumption by half, while producing at least two-thirds of the tonnage as before,” said Sporcic. “Our goal is to reduce water consumption by more than the reduction in tonnage.”

The Agricultural Science Center at Clovis reports that the current yield research shows good yields using sorghums and reduced tillage, but more than one year's of study is needed to determine the viability of the early results.

Meanwhile NRCS is open to farmers that would like to demonstrate the new system to further explore opportunities for eastern New Mexico.

“There is potential to help our growers who are running out of water,” said Sporcic. “The minimum or no tillage part of the equation can also help a farmer meet our soil quality index, and make them eligible for some of our other programs.”

For further information about this research effort call NRCS at (505)761-4424.

###