**VENTURA COUNTY AGRICULTURAL WATER AND ENERGY USE EFFICIENCY PROGRAM (AWUE)**
**Technical Assistance and Equipment Rebates**
**FACT SHEET**
***Funded by a State of California Proposition 84 Drought Grant****

The drought and groundwater sustainability goals are challenging farmers to use every drop wisely. To help, the State of California has awarded Ventura County a cost share grant with $1.2 million available for technical assistance and equipment rebates to improve agricultural irrigation and energy efficiency.

**What does the funding cover?**

The program will rebate farmers up to 60% of equipment upgrades that demonstrate quantifiable water and energy savings. This may include irrigation timers, meters, sprinklers, soil moisture sensors, drip tape and emitters, irrigation software, high efficiency pumps, pipes and valves. (Installation costs are not reimbursable due to grant restrictions.)

**Who is eligible?**

All commercial farms in Ventura County may complete the AWUE Interest Survey for the program. The farming operations with the greatest potential for savings will be invited to begin the program by signing the AWUE Cooperative Agreement (sample available for review at bit.ly/AWUE-grant).

**How does it work?**

Participating farms will have a free, on-site technical evaluation of operations and irrigation system(s) to develop a set of recommendations to improve water and energy efficiency. The evaluation may include a distribution uniformity (DU) test of the irrigation system(s) to determine if the system is applying irrigation water optimally, a review of irrigation scheduling vs. crop need, and other related practices and operational/testing equipment.

In conjunction with irrigation efficiency, opportunities for energy savings will also be evaluated. As a cooperative evaluation, innovative ideas that improve water efficiency will be explored for possible recommendation.

Equipment upgrades that are mutually agreed upon and implemented within one year at the farmer's upfront cost will be up to 60% reimbursed following a free post-project evaluation.

**Are there other funding opportunities?**

Farmers in Ventura County who meet certain requirements may also be eligible for funding from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to further offset equipment costs of the same water and energy efficiency improvements. This includes special assistance funding for farms located in these Calleguas Creek subwatersheds: Revolon Slough, Beardsley Wash, Las Posas Arroyo and Lower Conejo Arroyo. Contact Dawn Afman, NRCS at dawn.afman@ca.usda.gov or (805) 984-2358 x101 for more information.

**What is the timing?**

The AWUE Interest Survey completed by any Ventura County commercial farmer are currently being accepted until funding is exhausted. Surveys will be ranked and those with the greatest potential water savings will be invited to begin the process. NRCS potentially coordinated equipment improvements will receive extra credit in the selection process.

**How do I begin?**

Visit **bit.ly/AWUE-grant** webpage for current grant information. It is recommended that you review the sample AWUE Cooperative Agreement on the webpage to fully understand the program conditions before deciding to complete the AWUE Interest Survey.

**Questions?**

For AWUE program information questions, please contact Nancy Broschart, Farm Bureau of Ventura County, at nancy@farmbureauvc.com or (805) 289-0155.

For field evaluation questions, please contact Jamie Whiteford, Ventura County Resource Conservation District, at jamie.k.whiteford@gmail.com or (805) 764-5132.

FARM BUREAU
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THE INDEPENDENT VOICE FOR AGRICULTURE

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