

IRRIGATION AID ENDS FOR SEASON

Since the growing season for the principle summer crops is coming to an end, this will be the last weekly issue of Evapotranspiration (ET) data for the 2017 irrigation season. This was the 44th season of providing ET information for the North Valley. The ET data will be made available next spring at the start of the 2018 irrigation season.

This information is provided as a joint effort by the California Department of Water Resources' Northern Region Office, the University of California Cooperative Extension in Tehama, Glenn and Yolo Counties (a.k.a. Tehama, Glenn and Yolo County Farm Advisor's office), and this newspaper. It is intended as an aid to irrigators to help determine when to irrigate and also how much water to apply.

The ET data, which appears weekly in this newspaper during the irrigation season, is a measure of the amount of water that is lost from the soil root zone due to crop use and soil surface evaporation. These are typically the most significant losses of soil moisture during the growing season. To gain the maximum value from this information you need to look for it each week during the irrigation season and compare it to how much irrigation water is applied with your irrigation system or how much rainfall is received.

If this is the first time that you have observed this information, you may want to note that these reports will be resumed approximately March 2018, depending on the spring weather conditions. In the meantime, you may want to make note of the season totals and compare them to your district water bills or estimates of groundwater pumped per acre. The comparison might provoke some interesting questions.

Information on how to use these weekly reports can be found at <http://cetehama.ucdavis.edu>. When at this web page, select "Water / Irrigation Program"; and then select "Weekly Soil Moisture Loss Reports". Each weekly soil moisture loss report is posted at this site including a two-page article with examples of how to use the report. A request for a hard copy of this article can be made at University of California Cooperative Extension in Red Bluff at 527-3101x 3. Assistance is also available at the Tehama County Mobile Irrigation Lab at 527-3013 x 102 or by calling the California Department of Water Resources, Northern Region Office at 529-7301.