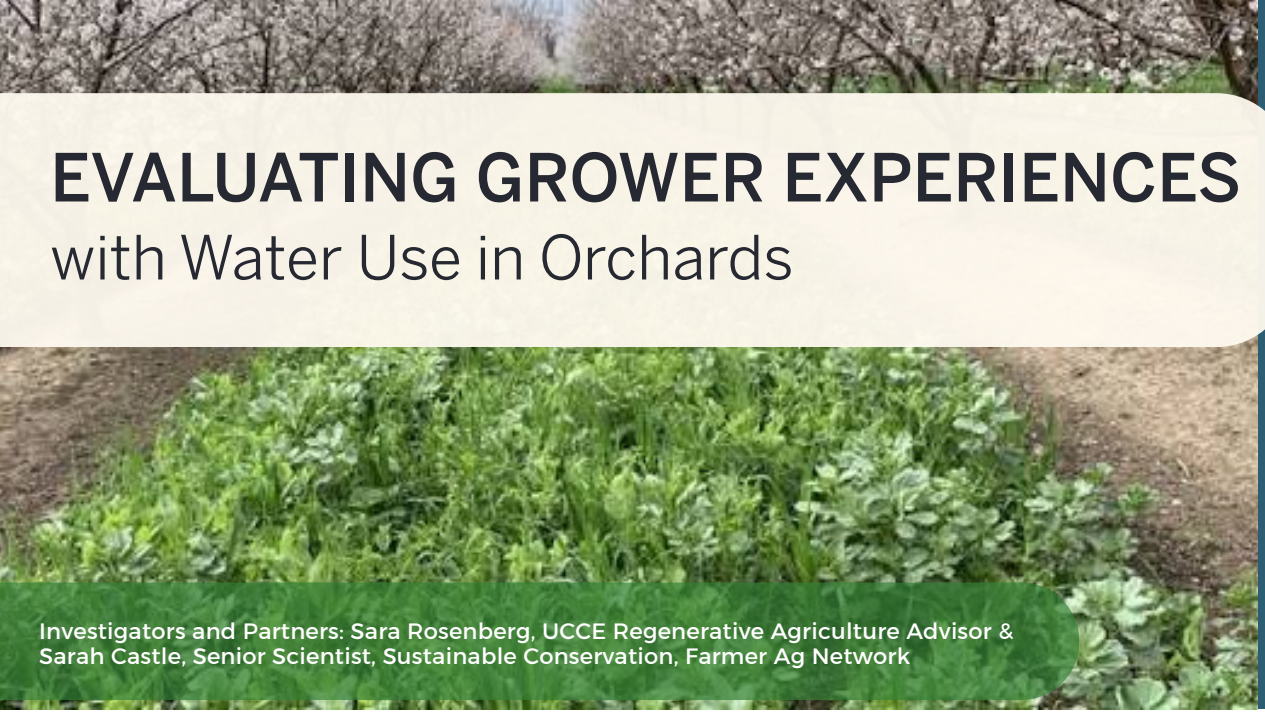

EVALUATING GROWER EXPERIENCES
with Water Use in Orchards

Sustainable Conservation

UC CE

FARMER AG NETWORK

Investigators and Partners: Sara Rosenberg, UCCE Regenerative Agriculture Advisor & Sarah Castle, Senior Scientist, Sustainable Conservation, Farmer Ag Network

You are being invited to join a research study to help us better understand how orchards that use soil health practices, in San Joaquin Valley, are using water differently than industry standard orchards.

We are looking for growers to participate in a survey and interview and provide information about water use and water benefits!

This research will provide information and guidance to Ground Water Agencies and growers on how soil health practices may support water sustainability goals.

WHAT YOU WILL RECEIVE:

- An amount of $200 will be provided as a token of appreciation for participation
- You may also use this money towards a soil health test on your farm.
- At the end of the study, the research findings will be shared with you in addition to a farm report summarizing your farm's data in the context of the broader research outcomes.

WHAT WE ARE EVALUATING:

- Using Open ET, evaluating consumptive water use differences across fields under different conservation management.
- Collecting farm data regarding applied water to understand how this differs from consumptive use (ET).
- Data from Phytech, Verdi, HotSpot, Water Informatics, and Wiseconn, for those growers who are clients and willing to share their information.
- Other data such as soil moisture, tree stress, or infiltration data to help us understand differences related to how soils store and move water.
- Interviews to learn about experiences with water use, and how irrigation practices may have changed since implementing soil health practices
- **We will be collecting coordinates of your farm, but there will be no identification associated with these coordinates, or to any data collected to ensure anonymity.**

SCAN HERE
to fill out intake form

FOR PARTICIPATING GROWERS

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REQUIRED CRITERIA

- Operating on pistachio, almond, or citrus farm
- Located across the following San Joaquin Valley Counties: San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare, Kern
- Have been implementing cover crops or vegetative resident cover practices for at least 2 years.
- Has shareable information on applied water
- Must be 18 years or older

PREFERENTIAL CRITERIA

- May also be using other conservation practices such as but not limited to compost, grazing, biochar, whole orchard recycling etc.
- Operating both conventional and fields using soil health practices which can be used as comparisons in the study.
- Willing to share data about multiple orchard sites.
- Uses automation irrigation system from Phytech, Verdi, HotSpot, Wiseconn, or Water Informatics



A CLOSER LOOK AT WHAT IS EXPECTED IF YOU WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY:

A draft of the survey can be found here.

We recommend you review the survey and note the questions that require you to reference records in advance. Examples of specific data required include:

- Cost of irrigation infrastructure and labor
- Yield and quality information from 2021-2025
- Yield per acre or for whole orchard (kernel meat or "crackout" weight for almonds and pistachios, packed weight for citrus)
- Rejection percentage for almonds and pistachios, "packout" percentage for citrus
- Applied irrigation water, ET/used water, and irrigation schedules from 2021-2026
- Management practice information (see survey draft for specifics)
- Amount of water applied for on farm ground water recharge, if any, from 2021-2026

CLICK HERE
to fill out intake form

QUESTIONS?

Contact Debbie:

559-309-2022

deborah@farmeragnetwork.org

or Hannah

559-779-1190

hannah@hannahjohnson.co

Taking part in research is completely voluntary. You are free to decline to take part in the project or you can stop taking part in the project at any time.