

**Texas Water Resources Institute
Integrated Farm Management
Strategic Ag Initiative Program
EPA Cooperative Agreement No. X8-96668501-0**

Quarter no. 4 From 06/1/09 Through 08/31/09

I. Abstract

Over 100 individuals participated or attended pesticide applicator training courses and crop production meetings this quarter. Additionally, a very successful water and energy conservation meeting was held just outside of the watershed in Rio Grande City. However, many of the participants in this workshop (over 100 attended) were citizens of the Arroyo Colorado watershed.

II. Overall Progress and Results by Task

Task 1. Project Coordination:

Subtask 1.1: Project Oversight –TWRI will provide technical and fiscal oversight to ensure Tasks and Deliverables are acceptable and completed as scheduled and within budget.

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. TWRI drafted a survey for training events as stated within task 2. Draft survey is being reviewed by AgriLife Extension and we hope to have it completed during the next quarter.
- b. TWRI worked with District 12 Extension to ensure project deliverables (program surveys) were being addressed. While individual surveys and exams do exist, a consistent program survey that could measure impacts of this project does not exist. Therefore, TWRI agreed to develop a survey during the next quarter for implementation.

48% Complete

Subtask 1.2: Fiscal/invoicing – The Texas AgriLife Extension Service will submit reimbursement forms per the schedule established/requested.

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. An invoice (R017280) for the time period of 03/1/09 thru 05/31/09 was submitted to EPA for \$12,504.60 leaving a balance of \$78,031.19 or 84% of the budget to be spent.

16% Complete

Subtask 1.3: Regular Meetings - To facilitate good communication between project participants, a quarterly meeting or teleconference will be scheduled and hosted by TWRI.

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. TWRI held a meeting with AgriLife Extension in Weslaco on July 27 and August 10, 2009 to discuss project activities to date and the expectations still to be met including the development of a survey tool following education meetings and the development of a fact sheet.

48% Complete

Subtask 1.4: Quarterly progress reports - TWRI, with the assistance of the project personnel, will submit progress reports to EPA Region 6 quarterly. The Reports will include the status of deliverables for each Objective and Task and a narrative description of activities for each task outlined in this Scope of Work in Progress Report format

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. TWRI will submit year 1, quarter 4 report on September 16, 2009.

48% Complete

Subtask 1.5: Final Report – TWRI, with assistance of project personnel, will provide EPA Region 6 with a comprehensive report on the activities during the course of this project.

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- a. Nothing to report at this time.

0% Complete

Task 2. Conducting Integrated Farm Management System Education Programs:

Subtask 2.1: A joint county Pesticide Applicator Safety Training and Continuing Education Program will be held on a quarterly basis for growers in Cameron, Willacy and Hidalgo County to educate individuals on the following topics:

- *principles of integrated pest management*
- *non-chemical alternatives and pest features*
- *ground and surface water protection*
- *laws and regulations and record keeping*
- *cost benefit of IPM*
- *pesticide labels*
- *endangered species protection*
- *Worker Protection Standards and personal protection*
- *maintenance and calibration of application equipment*
- *pesticide application safety training*

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

Date	Event	County	Description	Attendance	Materials Provided
8/5/09	Pesticide Safety Training	CH	Topics included: the principles of integrated pest management, non-chemical alternatives, pest features, ground and surface water protection, laws and regulations, pesticide labels, endangered species protection, Worker Protection Standards, record keeping, personal protection, application equipment, calibration and continuing education units.	6	✓ Appendix A

48% Complete

***Subtask 2.2:** Educational meetings will be held to educate producers on crop production, proper nutrient and irrigation management, soil testing, and integrated pest management practices including the economic benefits of an integrated management approach. Each of the following meetings will be held on an annual basis.*

- 1 cotton production meetings
- 1 sorghum production meeting
- 1 sugar cane production meeting
- 1 citrus production meeting
- 1 vegetable production meeting
- A soil testing campaign to promote proper use of fertilizers and nutrient management

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

Date	Event	County	Description	Attendance	Materials Provided
6/11/09	Spring Crops Tour and Seminar	CHW	Timely topics for ag producers including IPM strategies for soybeans in the LRGV and a tour of various crops such as grain sorghum, soybeans, sesame, etc.	101	✓ Appendix
6/24/09	Grain Sorghum Result Demonstration	H	Harvested grain sorghum variety trial on McDaniel Farm, Pharr		
7/1/09	Grain Sorghum Result Demonstration	C	Harvested grain sorghum variety trial on Edward Bauer Farm, La Feria		
7/27/09	Corn Result Demonstration	H	Harvested corn variety trial on John Mazingo Farm, Elsa		
8/7/09	Cotton Result Demonstration	H	Harvested cotton variety trial on Richard Drawe Farm, Weslaco		
8/18/09	Cotton Field Day	CHW	Field Day held to view plots and discuss timely issues of cotton production	26	

8/21/09	Cotton Result Demonstration	C	Harvested cotton variety trial on Edward Farm, La Feria		
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48% Complete

Subtask 2.3: Texas AgriLife Extension Service will hold joint county training events (at least 2 per year) to advertise and educate individuals on related programs addressing water quality.

- Promote cost–share programs (319(h), EQIP, etc.)
- Educate producers or assist local Soil and Water Conservation Districts (as possible) in development of water quality management plans
- Educate producers on involvement and implementation of the Arroyo Colorado Watershed Protection Plan and the potential effects

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- An update of FSA programs available to producers was provided during the June 6, 2009 Spring Crop Tour and Seminar event. This event is reported under subtask 2.2.

36% Complete

Subtask 2.4: Expand the outreach program to include a fact sheet and IPM newsletter (distributed annually and more frequently if needed) addressing the adoption of an integrated farm management system including implementation of IPM practices, production and best management practices to protect water quality, nutrient and irrigation management practices and participation in cost-share programs.

The following actions have been completed during this reporting period:

- A fact sheet and newsletter are being developed and anticipate a draft fact sheet and a final newsletter to be complete next quarter.

25% Complete

III. Related Issues/Current Problems and Favorable of Unusual Developments

- The following education programs are not directly related to agricultural production, but teach the same principles (nutrient management, environmentally sound practices and water quality aspects) on a residential/garden/home yard level to help protect the Arroyo Colorado watershed.

Date	Event	County	Description	Attendance	Materials Provided
6/6/09	Valley Home Water Conservation Conference	CHWS	Water and Energy conservation meeting designed for homeowners	115	✓ Appendix A

6/17/09	Cameron Master Gardener Training	C	Turfgrass management		
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IV. Projected Work for Next Quarter

- TWRI will work with AgriLife Extension to draft pre/post surveys to assess knowledge gained at meetings.
- TWRI will work with the County Extension Agent - Integrated Pest Management to begin drafting the annual newsletter.
- Education activities will continue.
- A fact sheet will be drafted next quarter that will inform soybean producers on proper growing techniques.

Appendix A





**Supplemental materials for selected education programs
(e.g. agendas, letters of invite, topics of discussion, etc.)**

Flip the Switch
Stop the Drip

Conserving Energy and Water



Free Educational Event
Spanish Translations

-  **Educational Workshops**
-  **Native Plant Sale**
-  **Drawing for Rain Barrels**
-  **Door Prizes**

Registration: Begins at 8:00 am
Program: 8:30 am to 12 noon

Saturday, June 6, 2009

South Texas College - Mid Valley Campus
North Academic Building G, Lecture Hall #191
400 North Border
Weslaco, Texas 78596

Contact:

Texas AgriLife Extension Service
Cameron County - 361-8236 • Hidalgo County - 383-1026
Starr County - 487-2306

Co-Sponsored by Biology Club at South Texas College
Funded By: Texas Water Resources Institute

Educational programs of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

Flip the Switch – Stop the Drip
Conserving Energy and Water
Its Worth the Trip
June 6, 2009



8:00a.m. Registration and Exhibits

8:30a.m. Welcome

- ✦ Changing Water Use in the Home (Presentation)
 - Rosa Guel, CEA-FCS

- ✦ Water Shed Demonstration
 - Omar Montemayor, CEA-AgNR
 - Ronnie Zamora, CEP-EA- AgNR

- ✦ Tips on Reducing Energy in the Home (Presentation)
 - Janie Harris,
Extension Housing & Environment
Specialist

- ✦ Water Wise Landscaping (Presentation)
 - Barbara Storz, CEA-HORT

- ✦ Drip Irrigation/Back Flow (Demonstration)
 - Brad Cowan, CEA-AgNR(COORD)

- Rainwater Harvesting (Presentation)
 - John Smith, Ext. Asst. – Soil & Crop
Sciences
 - Rainwater Exhibit
 - Jerry Gutshall



Participant Satisfaction Results

Activity Title: Starr County – Flip Switch Conservation

Activity Date: 06/06/09

Activity Description:

Number of Participants: 114

Percentages based on 72 respondents to the survey (Response rate = 63%).

Overall:

- 96% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the activity.

Content:

- 97% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the information being what they expected.
- 100% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the information being accurate.
- 96% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the information being easy to understand.
- 94% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the completeness of information given on each topic.
- 97% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the timeliness of information given on each topic.
- 91% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the helpfulness of the information in decisions about your own situation.
- 96% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the quality of course materials.
- 94% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the relevance of the examples used.

Instructor(s):

- 100% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the instructor's knowledge level on the subject.
- 94% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the instructor's speaking / presentation abilities.
- 100% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the instructor's organization / preparedness.
- 100% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the instructor responses to student questions.

Facilities:

- 99% of respondents were mostly or completely satisfied with the physical setting's contribution to ease of listening and participation.

Anticipated Changes & Economic Impact:

- 97% of respondents plan to take actions or make changes based on the information from this activity.
- 94% of respondents anticipate benefiting economically as a direct result of what they learned from this Extension activity.

Value of Activity:

- 91% of respondents said that the information and programs provided by Extension were quite or extremely valuable to them.
- 99% of respondents would recommend this activity to others.
- 97% of respondents would attend another subject offered by Extension if it addressed a specific need or interest of theirs.

Demographics of Participants:

- 67% female
33% male
- 0% Black
65% Hispanic
31% White
4% Other
- 17% under age 30
39% ages 30 to 49
43% ages 50 to 69
1% age 70 or older

Spring Crop Tour And Seminar 2009

Highlighting: Grain Sorghum, Soybeans, Safflower, Sesame

Sponsored by: Rio Farms, Inc., AgriLife Extension,
USDA-ARS, Texas Department of Agriculture

Date: Thursday June 11, 2009 Time: 10:00 a.m. Place: Rio Farms, Inc. Monte Alto

Welcome

Dale Murden

Tour Research Plots:

Grain Sorghum

Soybeans

Safflower

Sesame

Kiss Demo

Brad Cowan

James Grichar

Jerry Bergman

Jerry Riney

Dr. Scott Armstrong

IPM Strategies for Soybeans in the LRGV of Texas

Dr. John Adamczyk

Plant Disease Update

Dr. Tom Isakeit

LUNCH

Marketing the Crop

John Miller

Octavio Garcia

Texas Grain Sorghum Association Update

Wayne Cleveland

FSA Program

Franco Trevino

Tacho Cavazos

Pesticide Laws and Regs

Carlos Rivas

3 CEU's: 1-Laws & Regs, 1-IPM, 1-General

Hidalgo County

410 North 13th Avenue
Edinburg, Texas 78541
phone 956-383-1026 • fax 956-383-1735
July 28, 2009

TO: Certain Ag Producers

SUBJECT: Private Applicator License Training and Testing

You have indicated an interest in obtaining a private applicators license issued by the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA). The purpose of this letter is to inform you of the opportunity to attend the required training and testing. The next training and testing will be held on **Wednesday, August 5, 2009** at the Hidalgo County Extension Office, 410 North 13th Avenue, Edinburg. **Registration will be from 9:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. and the class will begin promptly at 10:00 a.m. Do not be late. You must attend the entire session. We will have a break in the training for lunch which will be on your own.**

This training will be conducted by Texas AgriLife Extension Service. For your convenience, arrangements have been made for TDA personnel to provide testing immediately after the training. The training will conclude around 3:00 p.m. and the test will be given after the conclusion of the training. The test usually takes about two hours.

A registration fee of \$50.00 will be charged for this training. This includes a set of training manuals. You may wish to obtain the manuals prior to the training so that you may review them ahead of time. To get your manuals, you may come by the Hidalgo County Extension Office in Edinburg, pay the \$50.00 registration fee and we will furnish you with the manuals. The manuals may also be ordered online. If you do not wish to review the manuals prior to the training, the registration fee may be paid at the door. Pre-registration is not required.

To become a licensed private applicator, you must attend this mandatory training, make a passing score of 70 or higher on the exam and then submit an application to TDA along with a \$60.00 license fee. The private applicator license is valid for 5 years. By the end of the five year licensing period, you must receive 15 hours of continuing education in order to renew the license for another five years.

While this training is specifically designed for private applicators, it is also an excellent review for anyone needing to study for the commercial/non-commercial license test.

If you are unsure of which license will meet your needs, contact TDA's regional office in San Juan at 956-787-8866 for assistance.

I recommend that you bring a calculator and a pen or pencil. If you have any questions, please give me a call.

Private Applicator License Training Schedule for 2009

February 4

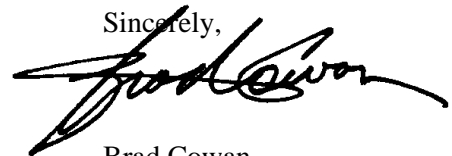
May 6

August 5

November 4

Dates, times and locations are subject to change. Check with the Extension office prior to the date to confirm.

Sincerely,



Brad Cowan
County Extension Agent-Agriculture
Hidalgo County

Persons with special needs are requested to call in advance so these may be addressed.