

Water Technology Farms Report Now Available

Technology and management tools keep evolving to help crop producers make every drop of water count on their fields. Water Technology Farms were developed four years ago as part of the *Long-Term Vision for the Future of Water Supply in Kansas*. They began as three-year pilot public-private partnerships to demonstrate the latest in crop irrigation technology and water conservation research on the field scale.

“I’m pleased to see the growing interest in Water Technology Farms across the state,” said Kansas Water Office Acting Director Earl Lewis. “We continue to see outcomes from these farms showing that water use reductions, coupled with irrigation technology adoption and water management improvements are leading to positive effects on the aquifer as well as the producer’s bottom line.”

Water Technology Farms have proven valuable in helping to expand the conversation and education of producers as well as decision makers on equipment and technology utilized in agricultural water conservation efforts.

“As one of the first three Tech Farms we have learned so much as far as water conservation production and how what we do affects the Ogallala Aquifer,” Dwane Roth, Garden City Company/Dwane Roth Farm near Holcomb, KS. “A fifth generation Kansan recently said to me that western Kansas is different compared to other parts of the world - our water problems are solvable! I now ask with what we know, do we become resilient? And in doing so have vibrant local communities or do we become just another page in the history books? I say we become resilient.”

The 2018 Growing Season Report shares information about each of the 10 farms including the crop or crops grown, technology utilized to manage water application, as well as harvest data and sponsors of each location.

“My goal as a first year Water Technology Farm was to increase the bushels per inch of irrigation we produced,” said Matt Long of Long Water Technology Farm near Marienthal, KS. “We really pushed our crop using different application technologies, soil moisture probes and a weather station to utilize our irrigation water efficiently which resulted in growing 34 bushels per inch of irrigation. As we start this spring with adequate profile moisture and more knowledge about the application technologies and soil probes, I am excited to see how much more progress we can achieve.”

It is anticipated up to five new farms will be added to the network in 2019,

bringing the total number of Water Technology Farms up to 15 for the 2019 growing season. Field days and other informational events in conjunction with the Water Technology Farm Program will take place later this summer. For more information and the complete 2018 Growing Season Report, visit www.kwo.ks.gov

The Water Technology Farms would not be possible without key public-private partnerships. More than 80 companies and organizations support this effort and sponsors for each farm are on the Water Tech Farm pages on the KWO website.

For more information visit: www.kwo.ks.gov or contact Armando Zarco, Water Resource Planner at (620) 276-2901.