

Irrigation Water Management

Irrigation Water Management (IWM) tools often help improve water quality and quantity. Tools such as sensor-based water management, variable rate technology, and nutrient and pest management allow producers to monitor and evaluate management impacts to the environment and increase yields.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) 2020

- Financial assistance is available to all operators for Irrigation Water Management (IWM) related practices.
- Acres must have been irrigated for at least 2 of the past 5 years.
- Eligible IWM Plans include:
 - * Basic Irrigation Water Management (Greater than 30 acres) - \$8 acre
 - * Intermediate Irrigation Water Management (Greater than 30 acres) - \$11 acre
 - * Advanced Irrigation Water Management (Greater than 30 acres) - \$18 acre
- Fertigation/Chemigation Retrofit - \$2,716.66
- Operators can apply for up to 3 consecutive years of payments for Basic, Intermediate, or Advanced IWM. Payments will be received each year after the IWM Plan is certified.
- Applications may be taken at anytime. The 2020 EQIP application deadline is March 13, 2020, at which time applicants must determine:
 - * The resource concern(s) to be addressed.
 - * The type of crop to be planted and their rotation.
 - * Amount of acres to be enrolled.



Stearns SWCD employee talks with a producer on irrigation water management.

Stearns County Highly Vulnerable DWSMAs: N Management Practices for Safe Drinking Water

- Financial assistance is available to implement Irrigation Water Management related practices in DWSMAs.

Potential Benefits of Irrigation Water Management

- Savings on water, energy, and costs.
- Improve irrigation water use efficiency.
- Provide sufficient soil moisture conditions for the desired crop response.
- Increase crop production/yields.
- Minimize irrigation induced soil erosion.
- Enhance nitrogen use through fertigation.
- Reduce nutrient runoff to surface water and reduce the potential to leach nutrients to groundwater.



View of fertigation system with check valves and portable tank.

Additional IWM Practices



Variable Rate Irrigation by Zone

Integrating variable application technology onto a center pivot system for precision zone placement of water along the length of the system for water savings.



Fertigation Retrofit

Integrating fertigation application technology onto a center pivot system for efficient placement of chemicals along the length of the system.



Uniformity Test/Catch Can Test

Stearns SWCD offers free uniformity tests on irrigation center, lateral, and traveling gun units. Tests measure the distribution of water to determine if water is being applied evenly.

***To be eligible for any of these practices, an IWM Plan must be included in the contract or plan.
Let us help you decide what may personally work best for your operation!***



Soil Moisture Sensors, Data Recorder, & Telemetry Options

All 3 of these technologies provide different levels of measuring soil moisture conditions allowing for more accurate irrigation adjustments.



High to Low Pressure Conversion

Changing nozzles on a center pivot to a low pressure system to improve efficiency of water usage and to reduce energy use.



Micro-Irrigation

There are several options available for micro-irrigation systems including: Subsurface Drip Irrigation (SDI), Surface Drip Irrigation (within a hoop house), and Surface Tape.

Stearns County Soil & Water Conservation District Natural Resources Conservation Service



110 2nd Street South, Suite 128
Waite Park, MN 56387



(320) 251-7800 ext. 3

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