

Get the most from irrigation dollars

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Gothenburg field day is Aug. 20

Even though the prices of fuel and nitrogen have backed off a little this year, producers in Nebraska are still looking for better irrigation strategies to get the most from the water they have and the nitrogen they apply, said Steve Melvin, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension educator.

“The Irrigation Strategies Field Tour Series focuses on showing farmers and crop consultants management strategies to conserve water,” he said. “The primary focus is on working with producers and crop consultants to develop and demonstrate soil moisture monitoring equipment and irrigation scheduling strategies on farmer fields.”

The field tour in Gothenburg will start at 6 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 20, with a meal. The field is located 1 miles east of the intersection of Nebraska Highway 47 and 27th Street (north edge of Gothenburg). The plot is on the north side of road.

Melvin’s goal is to make irrigation decisions as easy as keeping fuel in the tank using the fuel gauge.

Applying the optimum level of water is more important today than it has ever been. Applying excess water costs extra money, leaches nitrogen below the root zone, and can lower yields. Putting on too little water will also lower yields.

The program will teach methods to help you get the most effective use out of your irrigation water and energy dollars by focusing on lowering pumping plant energy costs and applying the optimum amount of water.

The field tour topics will include: water resource update; comparing irrigation energy sources: costs and emissions requirements; monitoring crop water use and soil moisture status—simple, durable, accurate, and economical tools; water savings with crop residue management;

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predicting the last irrigation; and how time of application and amount of water applied effects crop yield.

Program speakers include: Melvin; Derrel Martin, UNL irrigation and water resources specialist; and Simon van Donk, UNL irrigation and water resources specialist.

For more information about the Irrigation Strategies Field Tour Series, contact Steve Melvin at 308-367-4424 (smelvin@unl.edu) or Alan Corr at 308-830-3086 (acorr@unl.edu).