

Uvalde to host Feb. 2 South Texas Irrigation Symposium

UVALDE — The Texas AgriLife Extension Service and Irrigation Technology Center will present the South Texas Irrigation Symposium 2011 and “Last Chance CEU Blowout” on Feb. 2 at Southwest Texas Junior College in Uvalde.

The symposium will take place in the college’s Student Center Ballroom.

The morning portion of the symposium will begin at 8:15 a.m. and conclude at 1:30 p.m., with a catered lunch served at 12:30 p.m. Sessions during this period will provide opportunities for three continuing education units for Texas Department of Agriculture private applicator and commercial/non-commercial license-holders – 2.5 in the general category and 0.5 in integrated pest management.

Event coordinators said this portion of the symposium also has been approved for four continuing education units for certified crop advisors – 2.5 in water management, one in nutrient management and 0.5 in professional development.

The afternoon CEU blowout portion of the symposium includes opportunities at 1:30, 3:30 and 5:30 p.m. for a total of six continuing education units in various categories for TDA applicator license-holders – 1.5 in laws and regulations, two in integrated pest management, 1.5 in drift management and one in general.

“Water is the single-most valuable natural resource for South Texas, and the irrigation symposium addresses the issues relating to groundwater use and the best practices and technology that can be used to conserve water resources while maximizing their effectiveness,” said Dr. Guy Fipps, AgriLife Extension agricultural engineer at Texas A&M University in College Station and symposium moderator.

Fipps said the symposium will be presented in two sessions, with the first session focused on improving production and reducing costs and the second focused on innovations in drip and center-pivot irrigation.

Some of the topics to be covered in the first session include updates on groundwater regulation and legislation and Natural Resources Conservation Service programs, fertility and irrigated crop management, tools for effective water management, maximizing pumping efficiency.

Topics to be addressed during the second session will include drip and pivot irrigation equipment and options, and an update on variable-rate irrigation and other pivot irrigation research.

Lunch will be sponsored by Crop Protection Services of Uvalde and will include a featured speaker to present an update on the region’s boll weevil eradication program.



The South Texas Irrigation Symposium will be held Feb. 2 in Uvalde. Along with several sessions on irrigation, it will include a trade show and afternoon "CEU blowout" for attendees seeking continuing education units. (Texas AgriLife Extension Service photo)

Symposium presenters include Fipps; Luana Buckner, general manager, Medina County Groundwater Conservation District; Melony Sikes, NRCS program liaison, San Angelo; Dr. Charles Stichler, consultant, Sabinal; Nich Kenny, AgriLife Extension program specialist – agricultural engineering, Amarillo; Charles Swanson, AgriLife Extension program specialist – irrigation, College Station; Jerry Funck, Professional Water Management Associates, Lubbock; Gene Ross, district manager, Nelson Irrigation Corp.; Edwin Smith, district manager, Senninger Irrigation, Inc.; and Jim Bordovsky, Texas AgriLife Research agricultural engineer, Halfway center.

Fipps said the symposium is being coordinated in cooperation with AgriLife Extension offices in Uvalde, Medina and Frio counties and also will include a modest trade show with exhibits by area irrigation industry dealers, manufacturer representatives, suppliers and distributors. Attendees are requested to contact the AgriLife Extension office in their county to register.

“We have presented a conference or symposium in this region since the early ‘90s,” he said. “It’s typically been every two to three years and the theme or thrust has changed as the issues have changed. This time, in addition to regulatory issues, we’re focusing on more of the basics, like recurring drought, pumping costs, and technology and methods to help growers improve their irrigation efficiency and overall productivity.”

The cost of the symposium will be \$10 for the morning sessions alone, \$10 for the afternoon sessions alone or \$15 for both sessions, with lunch included. At-the-door late registration will also be available at a cost of \$25. Checks should be made payable to Uvalde Crops Committee and mailed to Uvalde County AgriLife Extension, P.O. Box 1708, Uvalde, TX 78802.

For more information on the symposium, contact Fipps at 979-845-3977 or GFipps@ag.tamu.edu .

To register, contact Bryson Dalrymple in Uvalde County at 830-278-6661 or JBDalrymple@ag.tamu.edu, Jason Ott in Medina County at 830-741-6180 or JOtt@ag.tamu.edu or Jaime Lopez in Frio County at 830-344-0099.

Symposium coordinators noted that while late registration at the door is available, attendees are requested to register by Jan. 28 to help ensure an accurate meal count.