

AgriLife Extension irrigation engineer receives national award

Dr. Guy Fipps is known for his work in the Rio Grande Valley as well as Afghanistan

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Dr. Guy Fipps consults with a farmer in Ghanzi Province of Afghanistan. For nine months, from late 2005 to 2006, Fipps advised Afghans on issues related to water use, allocations and development. (Texas AgriLife Extension Service photo)

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COLLEGE STATION – Dr. Guy Fipps, Texas AgriLife Extension Service engineer, has received an award for his work advancing surface irrigation and saving water in Texas and abroad.

The [American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers](#) presented Fipps with their award for The Advancement of Surface Irrigation on Aug. 1 at their annual meeting, held at the Hilton Anatole, Dallas.

The award documentation cites Fipps' efforts in the Rio Grande Basin, where his work is credited with reducing water losses by irrigation districts by 240,000 acre-feet annually. One acre-foot of water is equal to about 326,000 gallons.

"Dr. Fipps promoted and developed much of the mapping of districts and their facilities that opened the door to a whole new world of how to deal with the management of our water resource," said Wayne Halbert, general manager of the Harlingen Irrigation District, in a letter of support. "The districts in the Rio Grande Valley are indebted to Dr. Fipps for his ingenuity, his persistence and his patience as many of his ideas have come to fruition."

Fipps' international work was also a factor in his receiving the award.

"Dr. Fipps international work has targeted improvement of irrigation – including surface irrigation – through project consultation/advisory efforts and educational program development and support in China, Mexico, Jordan, and Uzbekistan, to name a few," said associate professor with the Texas A&M University department of biological and agricultural engineering, College Station.

According to the award documentation, Fipps is also known for his development of a combination of tools, including geographic information, land surveys and databases, used by irrigators to improve efficiency and reduce irrigation water losses, according to Charles Swanson, AgriLife Extension specialist who works closely with Fipps.

Fipps received his bachelor's in liberal arts from the University of Texas in 1977, a bachelor's in agricultural engineering from Texas A&M University in 1979, and a master's and a doctorate from North Carolina State University in 1984 and 1988, respectively. He has been an AgriLife Extension specialist and a Texas A&M faculty member since 1988.

He is a charter member and served as director of the Texas Agricultural Irrigation Association from 1991-1992. He served as associate editor for the Journal of Applied Engineering in Agriculture from 1995 to 1997. He was a senior adviser for the Water, Afghan Reconstruction Group, U.S. Embassy-Kabul. He is also the founder and director of the [Texas A&M Irrigation Technology Center](#).

Fipps is a member of numerous professional organizations, including: the American Society of Civil Engineers; the U.S. Committee on Irrigation and Drainage; the American Geophysical Union; and the American Water Resources Association.