

## **FEATURE – IRRIGATION SURVEY**

INTRO: The U-S Department of Agriculture is asking farmers and ranchers about their water use to learn about future irrigation needs. The USDA's Bob Ellison has more.  
(1:40)

THE U-S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE IS CONDUCTING ITS FIVE YEAR NATIONAL IRRIGATION SURVEY. U-S-D-A'S NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE SURVEYS FARMERS AND RANCHERS TO GET INFORMATION ON IRRIGATION WATER USE.

Carol House, Deputy Administrator, USDA NASS: We need to have more information about which producers are using that water, how they're using it. Some of the conservation procedures they are following to make better use of that water.

HOUSE SAYS THE SURVEY RESULTS ARE USED BY INDUSTRY, GOVERNMENT AND PRODUCERS TO IMPROVE IRRIGATION TECHNOLOGY, WATER USE AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT.

House: What this does is it gives the actual irrigators a voice into the future of using water in agriculture and we think it is their responsibility to step up and have their voice heard.

There are going to be decisions on how we use a limited resource like our water and so policy decisions will be made on how it can be used and probably the price of water.

THE HORTICULTURE AND NURSERY INDUSTRY WILL BE INCLUDED IN THIS YEAR'S SURVEY FOR THE FIRST TIME. HOUSE SAYS THIS WILL MAKE THE SURVEY THE MOST ACCURATE EVER.

House: We were leaving out the horticulture and nursery industry, but its growth has been phenomenal over the years and it's very important because they do use a lot of water and they use it differently than somebody who is growing field crops.

IRRIGATION SURVEYS HAVE BEEN MAILED TO THIRTY FIVE THOUSAND PRODUCERS. THE FORMS ARE DUE BY FEBRUARY SEVENTEENTH. RECIPIENTS ARE LEGALLY REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE. ALL INFORMATION IS KEPT CONFIDENTIAL BY LAW. IN WASHINGTON FOR THE U-S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, I'M BOB ELLISON.