

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Field Day Showcases Water Technology Farms

Water Conservation Techniques Demonstrated at T&O Farms

Finney County -Today T&O Farms, LLC, the first Water Technology Farm, hosted more than 200 attendees to demonstrate technologies implemented that focus on irrigating effectively from a depleting water source.

The Water Technology Farm concept was developed as an action item within the Kansas Water Vision which Governor Brownback called for in 2013 to address the state's water supply issues.

"It's time to be passionate about our opportunities in western Kansas. These types of technologies are vital to helping us preserve and extend the aquifer for as long as we can," said Gov., Brownback. "It's time to think about the aquifer as a bank account and having an account that you're passing on to your children or grandchildren."

Owner of T&O Farms, LLC, Tom Willis shared his vision for the three year project as well as the future of water supply in Western Kansas.

"My motivation is two-fold, not only do we have an ethanol business here but I farm. I want to pass this farm to my son when he returns from serving our country," said Willis. "My goal for this three year project is to prove it is possible to grow more with less and see this duplicated all over the aquifer."

Director of the Kansas Water Office, Tracy Streeter, was appointed to lead the Water Vision Team. Two years ago the team developed the Water Technology Farm concept and knew in order to be successful it had to be based on public-private partnerships. The farm has 24 sponsors showing the drive for Kansans wanting to conserve water.

"This farm is a product of two action items in the Vision, Water Technology Farms and Water Conservation Areas, (WCAs)." said Streeter. "It is exciting to stand here today and say not only is this farm one of the three WCAs in Kansas but to also share to date these technologies have demonstrated the potential for a minimum of at least 3 inches of water conservation in the first year of this three year project."

Attendees heard comments and technical briefings from Jonathan Aguilar of K-State Research and Extension, Loren Seaman and Scott Schechter of Seaman Crop Consulting, Monty Teeter of Teeter Irrigation and Mike Meyer of the Kansas Department of Agriculture Division of Water Resources.

The technologies were also demonstrated firsthand to the attendees. Participants observed the irrigation systems in place, which includes four fields equipped with Dragon-Line™, a technology that delivers water and

nutrients directly into the soil rather than spraying the whole canopy and field, and four equipped with low pressure spray nozzles. Each field also has two soil moisture probes to sense the current soil moisture and if or when water application is needed. The systems are fully automated and link water use, groundwater levels and moisture sensor data.

Two other Water Technology Farms in Kansas are being created as well and others are planned for the upcoming 2017 growing season. For more information about the farms or WCAs visit the vision page at www.kwo.org.

Sidebar: Partners for Water Technology Farms include: T&O Farms, LLC, Kansas Water Office, K-State Research and Extension, Kansas Department of Agriculture, Kansas Farm Bureau, Kansas Geological Survey, Teeter Irrigation, Conestoga Energy Partners, Helena, United Sorghum Checkoff Program, Kansas Corn Commission, K-State Mesonet, Servi-Tech Expanded Premium Services, LLC, Seaman Crop Consulting, Hortau, AquaSpy, CropMetrics, Hugoton, Southwest Groundwater Management District No.3, Netafim, Kansas Grain Sorghum Commission, Valley Irrigation and Presley Solutions

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As the state's water office, KWO conducts water planning, policy coordination and water marketing as well as facilitates public input throughout the state.

The agency prepares the KANSAS WATER PLAN, a plan for water resources development, management and conservation. KWO also reviews all water laws and makes recommendations to the Governor and Legislature for needed legislation.