

Irrigation Energy Field Day, Thursday, July 28 At Portageville

BLOOMFIELD, MO.

An Irrigation Energy Field Day will be held on Thursday, July 28th at the University of Missouri Delta Center in Portageville, MO. The free, half-day event will feature indoor sessions and outdoor tours. Speakers will address methods that farmers can employ to reduce their irrigation energy costs by identifying opportunities for increasing energy efficiency and showing how to conduct energy assessments and to calculate energy savings and simple payback.

"In the not-so-long-ago days of 'one dollar diesel', Missouri irrigators didn't worry about irrigation pumping costs" said Dr. Joe Henggeler, co-organizer of the Field Day. "Survey data taken prior to 2004 showed that despite energy source or crop (other than rice), be it watered with a pivot or by gravity, farmers spent less than \$10/acre for irrigation energy". After Hurricane Katrina fossil fuel prices jumped appreciably. The one-dollar-diesel soon reached \$4 a gallon, and Missouri irrigators started worrying.

Besides the speakers the Field Day will also include displays from companies involved in the irrigation industry. One group of vendors with special products capable of reducing irrigation costs are the manufacturers of wireless soil moisture sensing units. These devices can text farmers when it's time to irrigate. Cotton Incorporated,

which is funding research on wireless sensors in several Cotton Belt states, feels that this technology holds promise. Dr. Ed Barnes of Cotton Incorporated will be one of the speakers.

Co-organizer Dr. Van Ayers said that this Field Day specifically targets the farming public facing escalating fuel prices. "Even the date was set to occur during the down time between lay-by and harvest so that maximum farmer attendance can occur." Ayers hosted an irrigation field day twenty years ago at the same site with 200 in attendance, and feels that this one could top 500 attendees.

The Field Day is made possible by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources from a grant to the University of Missouri to provide energy training for farmers, made possible by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Field Day check-in starts at 7:30 a.m. and concludes at 1:00 p.m. The Field Day is FREE. The catered lunch is also free by using the lunch ticket that can be printed off when pre-registering on-line, or can be purchased on-site for \$15.

For more information contact Dr. Van Ayers at 573-568-3344, ayersv@missouri.edu or Dr. Joe Henggeler at (915) 379-5431, henggelerj@missouri.edu.

Pre-registration is available at: <http://agebb.missouri.edu/irrigate/bhconf/2011b/prereg.htm>. Δ