

## What the Farm Water Quality Project Does

**Goal:** To assist growers in addressing nonpoint source pollutants, specifically sediments, pesticides, nutrients, and salinity in surface waterbodies and groundwater

### Delivers classroom training, field training, & resource materials on

- Water quality regulations and local watershed issues
- Site assessment for nonpoint source pollutants
- Management goals for sediments, nutrients, pesticides, salinity
- Methods for recognizing practices already in place protecting water quality
- Management practices that may be selected for local conditions and crops
- Practice evaluation methods
- Cost-associated value of water quality protection practices

### Introduces growers to

- Local regulatory agency personnel with opportunities for interaction
- Federal and State cost-share opportunities for on-site implementation

### Promotes completion of water quality management plans that

- Are individual to the operation
- Record current practices that protect water quality
- Complete a nonpoint source site assessment for potential pollutants
- Includes an implementation schedule for accomplishing water quality management practices

**FORMAT:** Five-session short course, including one field day; 15 hours total

**SCOPE:** Central Coast of California

**CROPPING SYSTEMS:** Vegetables, Strawberries, Caneberries, Vineyards, Orchards, Floriculture, Nurseries



Local UC Advisors and NRCS Technical Staff illustrate problems and provide potential management practice solutions for specific pollutants in classroom sessions.



Field sessions demonstrate site-assessments. Technical staff and participants share ideas and experiences.

## 450 GROWERS HAVE ATTENDED THE COURSE

Some comments during the course:

### How will you use what you learned today?

- "I'll begin to think about achieving goals"
- "I'll evaluate both upstream and downstream"
- "I'll put into practice ways to catch or slow water"

### What was the most helpful part of today's discussion?

- "Learning how to set-up mapping and sediment management"
- "Understanding problem areas where we need to focus on and what should be first and foremost"
- "Learning about how pesticides leach and how to prevent it"

### What was the best part of the course?

- "The information and idea exchange"
- "Learning how to combat sediments in runoff"
- "Learning about the agency's that are involved to help solve problems"
- "We learned something from everyone involved"
- "The group participation, questions and answers"
- "It covered a lot of subjects that opened my eyes on things that will help my operations"
- "Learning about ways to monitor fertilizer and rain runoff and ways to maintain the environment"
- "Hearing from growers directly about what practices work"
- "The binder is professional and easy to reference and use"
- "We got it off the ground, so now it's up to us to do it right"

### Six-month evaluation:

#### I have incorporated the following practices from the short course:

- "I switched to low rates of nitrogen side dressing"
- "I changed to other soil applied insecticides with less leaching potential"
- "I use predator habitat strips and will add more predator habitat buffer zones"
- "We used banding when we sprayed"
- "We updated the irrigation system and use better pesticide handling"

## WHAT CAN WE DO TO PROTECT WATER QUALITY?

### GROWERS

- Assess agricultural operations for sources of potential pollutants
- Demonstrate compliance with water quality regulations through development of management plans for implementing water quality protection practices
- Implement management practices that protect water quality

### UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

- Evaluate current management practices for value in protecting surface and ground water resources
- Develop guidelines that help growers evaluate impacts of practices on production of potential pollutants
- Direct research efforts towards developing management practices that reduce impacts to water quality from agricultural operations

### NRCS

- Provide cost-share funding opportunities for implementation of conservation practices that protect water quality
- Provide free resource conservation planning assistance to growers

## How growers get to the course

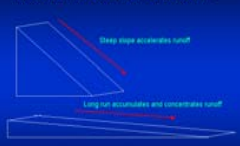
Outreach by local Farm Bureau working groups encourages farmers to attend the course

Peer pressure between growers to address water quality within shared watersheds



## During the course we present:

### Erosion from Steep or Long Slopes



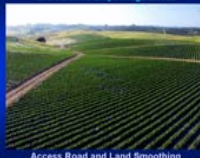
the theory

### Erosion from Long Slopes



the problem

### Management Practices to break up Long Runs and Remove Slope Irregularities



and possible solutions

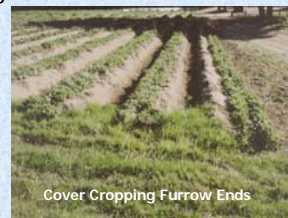
## After the course

Follow-up by Farm Bureau coordinators

Tailgate workshops on topics identified by growers during short course

Growers complete Water Quality Plans

Practices are implemented



Cover Cropping Furrow Ends



Grassed Roadway, Row Arrangement and Lined Channel

## THREE PILOT COURSES WERE HELD IN 2001 NINETEEN COURSES HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED AS OF APRIL 2004

in Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Monterey, San Benito, Santa Cruz, Santa Clara, and San Mateo Counties

Including a Pilot Spanish-Language Course in cooperation with the Agricultural and Land-Based Training Association (ALBA) and a pilot program in El Dorado County in February 2004

### Project Partners:

University of California  
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

### In cooperation with:

Growers of irrigated agriculture in the seven counties  
Central Coast Coalition of County Farm Bureaus  
Resource Conservation Districts  
(Cachuma, Coastal San Luis, Loma Prieta, Monterey County, San Benito, San Mateo, Santa Cruz, Upper Salinas-Las Tablas)

### FUNDED THROUGH:

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Soil and Water Conservation Grant Program 2003-2004  
California State Water Resources Control Board  
Section 319(h) Grant Program 2001-2003  
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Environmental Quality Incentives Program 2001-2003  
David and Lucille Packard Foundation  
Conserving California Landscapes Initiative 2000-2001  
DANR Water Quality Workgroup  
Farm Water Quality Task Force 2000-2004  
USDA Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service  
Water Quality Program 1999-2000