

UGA County Agents Facilitate Water Conservation Programming in Multiple Water Related Disciplines Across South Georgia in 2023-2025 Through Collaboration with the UGA Ag Water Team

Sapp,*P.¹, Anderson, H.¹, Bagby, A.¹, Barnes, T.¹, Bist, V.¹, Black, R.⁸, Bennett, J.¹, Bowen, D.¹, Brown, W.¹, Cloud, C.¹, Carlson, S.¹, Carter, B.¹, Carter, S.¹, Cook, J.¹, Crews, B.¹, Crosson, L.¹, Curry, S.¹, Dowdy, M.¹, Edenfield, J.¹, Edwards, P.⁶, Frye, M.¹, Green, R.¹, Grizzle, M.¹, Grubbs, H.², Hall, D.³, Hancock, K.¹, Hayes, B.¹, Hitson, L.¹⁰, Ingram, S.¹, Jacobs, J.¹, Joyce, R.¹, Kalina, J.¹, Kichler, J.¹, Lopez, C.¹, Luke, M.¹, Lyon, D.⁴, Luke, M.¹, Mallard, J.⁵, McAllister, S.¹, McDaniel, T.¹, Miller, J.¹, Mosteller, M.¹, Moye, H.¹, Newberry, A.¹, Porter, J.¹, Porter, W.⁷, Powell, C.¹, Powell, S.¹, Price, J.¹, Price, T.¹, Rogers, S.⁹, Royal, C.¹, Sanders, H.¹, Sapp, P.¹, Shealy, J.¹, Shirley, A.¹, Smith, A.¹, Smith, J.¹, Stanley, L.¹, Starr, B.¹, Tanner, S.¹, Tanner, R.¹, Tyson, B.¹, Vargas, A.^{10,11}, Young, C.¹, Washington, B.¹¹, Watson, W.¹, Williams, Z.¹, Wilson, T.¹



UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA EXTENSION Ag Water Team

¹ UGA Extension Agent/Educator, UGA Cooperative Extension; ² SW District UGA Summer Intern, Tifton, GA 31793; ³ SE District Area Educator, Cochran, Georgia 31014; ⁴ SW District Area Educator, Tifton, Georgia 31793; ⁵ SE District Extension Area Agent, UGA Cooperative Extension, Statesboro, Georgia 30460; ⁶ SW District Extension Area Agent, UGA Cooperative Extension, Tifton, Georgia 31793; ⁷ Associate Professor UGA Cooperative Extension Tifton, Georgia 31793; ⁸ UGA Southeast Research and Education Center Midville, GA 30441; ⁹ UGA Southwest Research and Education Center Plains, GA 31780; ¹⁰ UGA Attapulgus Research and Education Center Attapulgus, GA 39815; ¹¹ UGA CM Stripling Research Park Camilla, GA 31730

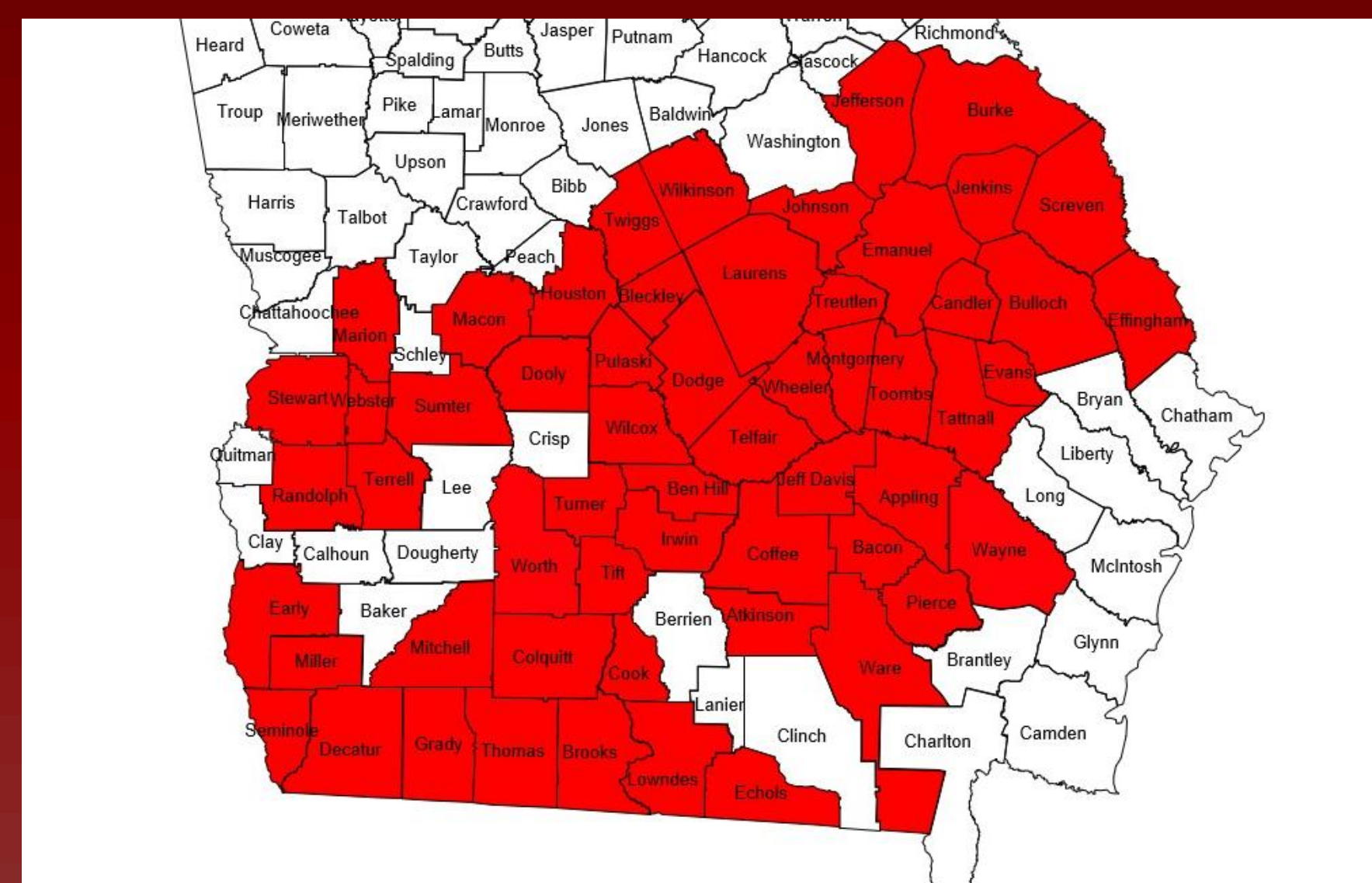


UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA EXTENSION Master Irrigator Program

SITUATION

Water is one of the most valuable resources in the State of Georgia. The availability of water is very important to the overall state economy, and especially in agriculture. Georgia has an obligation to make reasonable use of basin waters in order to help conserve this increasingly scarce resource in a sustainable manner. Efforts to conduct and promote irrigation scheduling, efficiency and water conservation cover the majority of South Georgia. Water programming focuses on soil moisture sensing technologies, smart irrigation apps and water use curves to maximize water use. Providing pivot uniformity tests keeps center pivots fine tuned for more efficient water utilization. Additionally, multiple programming efforts address water issues for the agricultural and rural community for both adults and youth by use of flow meters, infiltrometers, well cameras, conservation workshops, ag day events, field days, and county production meetings. Concentrated programs include Master Irrigator Program, Irrigated Corn and Cotton Variety Trials, and Peanut Aflatoxin Studies.

Water Programming 2023-2024



Youth Water Related Learning Opportunities



Program Meetings and Applied Research



RESPONSE AND ACTIVITIES

UGA Extension, through a team of agents, specialists, educators, and interns, worked together with agricultural producers and youth to address issues related to water conservation, education and management with the use of available technologies and tools to promote the efficient use of water resources for producer's and youth in 53 counties with assistance from 60 agents and educators.

Soil moisture sensors, apps, checkbook methods were used with various irrigation systems like center pivot, drip irrigation and micro-sprinklers. Soil moisture sensors utilized include: Ag Sense, AquaSpy, CropX, CropX ET Sensor, Realm, Trellis, and Meter. Smart apps used include: SICropFit, and Irrigator Pro

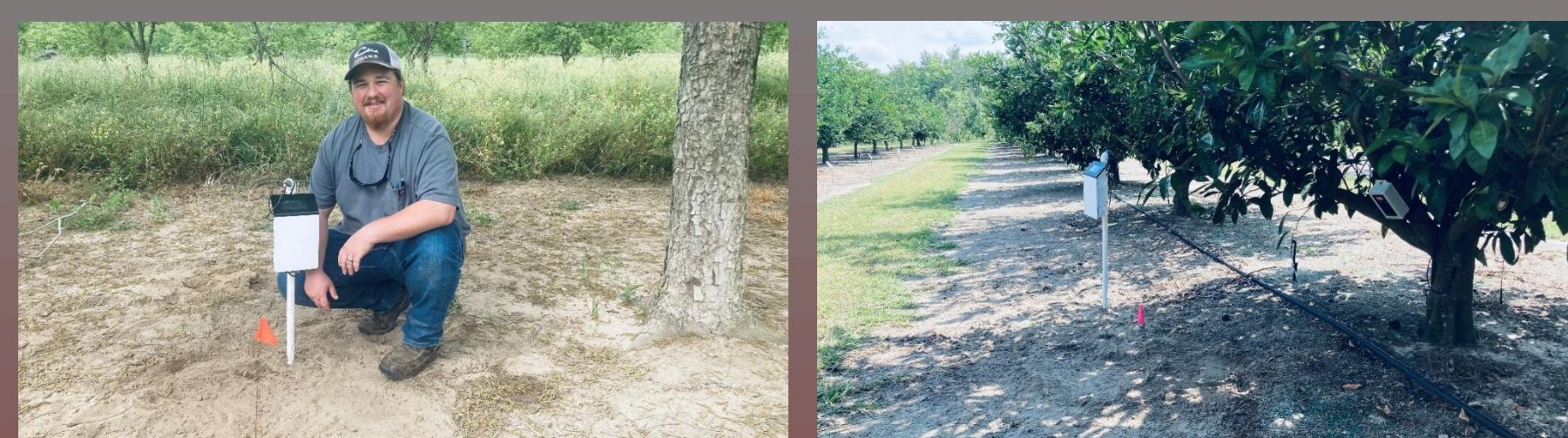
Mobile irrigation labs conducted pivot uniformity test across the state to determine if the system has satisfactory uniformity. Agent can request well camera, and flow meter to troubleshoot water issues at home and the farm.

Tools like the Enviroscape model, Tabletop Rainfall Simulator, provide a youth educational learning and teaching tool utilized by the county agent. Agents also facilitate and participate in H2O Water Days, AgTech Changemakers, and Natural Resource Conservation Workshops and other youth programs.

Many agent take irrigation leadership roles with topics at county meetings, trainings, conferences and field days sharing their efforts to the local community.

County agent participation is critical in major program areas like the Master Irrigator Program, variety trials, peanut aflatoxin study, and farmer participation with new sensors and other technology.

Soil Moisture Sensors



Pecan

Satsuma



Peanut

Watermelon



Vegetables

Corn



Blueberries

Cotton



Vidalia Onions

Soybeans

Mobile Irrigation Labs/Pivot Uniformity Tests



Excellent farmer and agent interactions

Field Days, Conferences and Site Visits



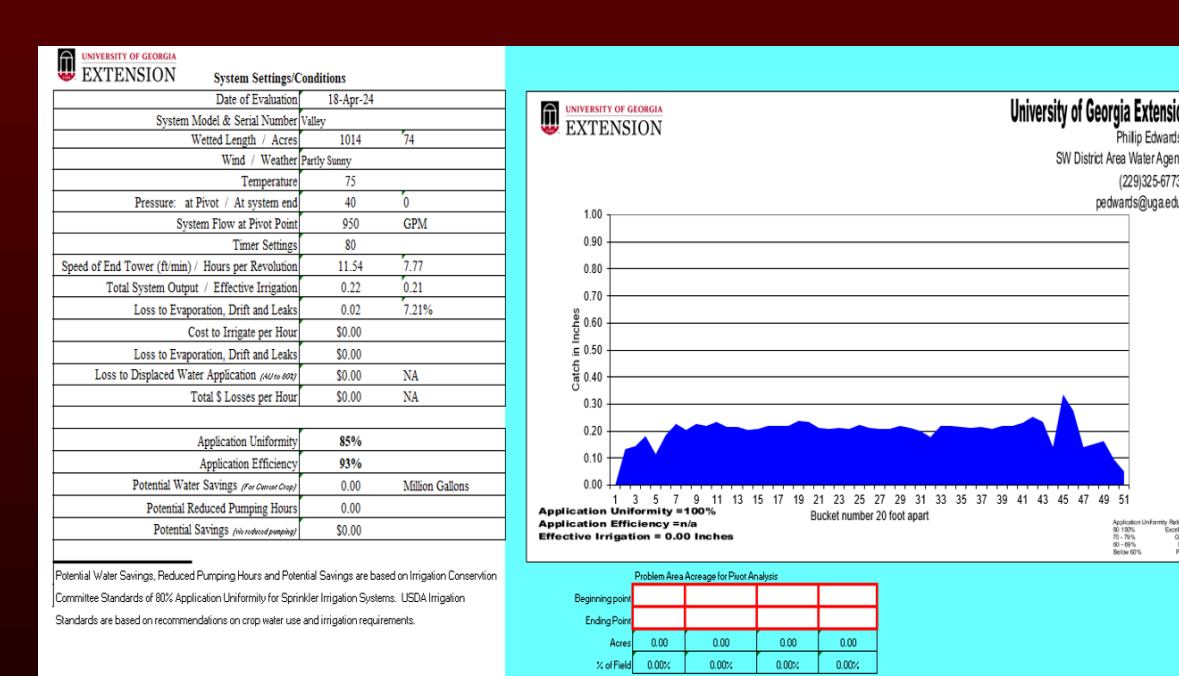
Taking information to the clientele

County Agent contributions to scholarship: Beltwide, NACAA, GACAA, SEFVGA, APRES

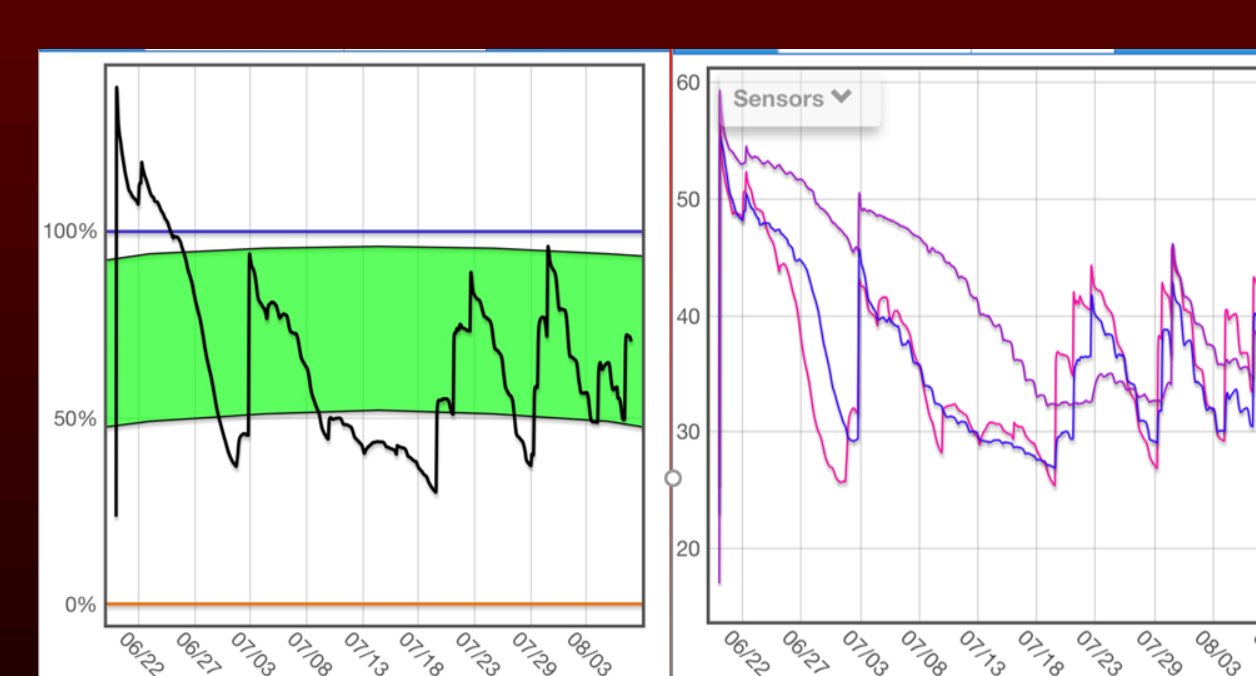


IMPACT/RESULTS

The impact of county agent participation in water conservation educational activities impacted over 5000 acres of ag commodity production acres and made over 20,000 contacts from January 2023 – February 2025. Recent data shows average water savings in cotton, peanut and corn is 2.25 inches, 3.75 inches and 11 inches respectively from over irrigation. This amounts to millions of gallons of water savings. The county agent efforts continue to equate to water savings as well as provide the increase of knowledge across South Georgia which will help manage our water resources.



Pivot Uniformity Results



Agents facilitate Soil moisture sensor farmer participation

