



## **USDA-CSREES 2006 National Water Quality Conference**

### [Water Use Issues In US Agriculture and Current Mitigation Measures](#)

In the last several years, agriculture has continued to be a major user of water in the United States. Compounding the problems is the emergence of other issues that are intensifying the competition for water. Considering the little prospects left for major water infrastructure development, United States agriculture is facing stiffer competition from urban and environmental demands for water resources. The gravity of the matter not only points to widespread competition for water in the arid Western region, but the trend is gradually becoming more evident in the more humid areas of the Eastern seaboard. Some of the factors are not far fetched. Extensive drought conditions, as well as allocation formulas of water, limit the capacity of water storage and delivery systems. This creates other complex issues involving clarification of water rights and coordination with public water authorities. Other factors consist of urbanization and population growth etc. In light of these issues, The Federal government, as a big provider and user of water, has a vital task in implementing programs that affect water use and other related activities in the sector. Even though previous efforts have partly curtailed the impacts of agricultural losses resulting from water deficit, the results remain dismal and in the process water resources, based problems continue to confront agricultural activities at an alarming proportion. Considering the urgency of the matter, there is a pressing need for the design of efficient water management strategies. This paper explores the current water issues facing US agriculture. Emphasis is on the extent of the problem, current mitigation efforts by the federal government and other entities to contain the problems as well as the underlying factors. To analyze the current water issues in US agriculture, the paper adopts a mix scale method based on secondary data, existing databases and case studies.

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