



Save Texas Water
Water Conservation Advisory Council
www.savetexaswater.org

NEWS RELEASE

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Advisory Council Recognizes Agriculture Award Winners for their Water Conservation Efforts

AUSTIN – (December 12, 2011) - The Water Conservation Advisory Council (Council) publically announced the 2011 winners of the Save Texas Water Blue Legacy Award in Agriculture. A presentation of the awards took place at the 2011 Texas Irrigation Expo (www.texasirrigationexpo.org) in McAllen, TX on December 9, 2011 where Council member, Dr. Robert Mace, presented the winners with their awards.

The Blue Legacy Award in Agriculture is an annual award that recognizes the outstanding water conservation efforts and successes of the agriculture community. Award winners were selected based on their demonstrated willingness and commitment to incorporate water conservation practices into their operations as well as their leadership to furthering water conservation in their community's or within the industry. This year's award selection committee consisted of representatives from Texas Farm Bureau, Texas Department of Agriculture, Texas AgriLife Extension, and Water Conservation Advisory Council.

The Council recognized the **North Plains Groundwater Conservation District - Agriculture Committee** for their Excellence in Collaborative Partnership. In 2009, the members of the agriculture committee, along with the rest of the district board, began planning a demonstration project based on their long-term perspective of irrigated agriculture in the region. In 2010, the three agriculture committee members dedicated their own irrigated acres for the first year of the "200-12 Project," largely at their own expense. They believed it was the role of the groundwater conservation district to show producers *how* to save water, not just require that they do it. The resulting demonstration project is the "200-12 Reduced Irrigation on Corn Project". The "200-12 Project" is a five year on-farm demonstration that shows how currently available water conservation technologies and irrigation management practices can reduce groundwater use and allow farmers to remain profitable and financially viable with restricted and diminishing groundwater resources. Members of the North Plains Groundwater Conservation District Agriculture Committee: **Mr. Danny Krienke, Mr. Harold Grall, and Mr. Phil Haaland.**

The Council also recognized three families and their farming operations for successfully promoting and incorporating water conservation through efforts in their operations.

- **D & D Farms and the Ford Family of Dumas, TX.** For the Fords, dryland farming in the Panhandle is unpredictable with moisture being the limiting factor. The Fords utilize strip-tillage as a method to help keep the moisture in the soil and cut irrigation costs
- **Gertson Farms and the Gertson Family of Lissie, TX.** Throughout the years the family has implemented a number of new strategies for achieving water conservation and has

overseen numerous transformations in their farming operations in order to use water more efficiently.

- **Schur Farms and the Schur Family of Plainview, TX.** Today most of the Schur's land that is irrigated utilizes the most efficient LEPA irrigation technology in conjunction with crop rotation, residue management, and irrigation scheduling and monitoring.

The award program provides an opportunity to broaden water conservation awareness in the agriculture industry. The Council hopes to use these success stories to promote the agricultural industry's efforts in water conservation as well as promote the individuals themselves as credible spokespersons.

To read more about the 2011 winners and to learn more about the Save Texas Water Blue Legacy Award in Agriculture, visit www.savetexaswater.org or contact Vanessa Escobar, Council Support Staff at: Vanessa.escobar@twdb.state.tx.us or (512) 463-1667.

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