

# USING EXTENSION TO INCREASE ADOPTION OF WATER-SAVING TECHNOLOGIES ON FARMS

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# OVERVIEW

- Extension – What is it and how can we help
- More demand, less water – what to do?
- Methods
  - Funding and equipment
  - Education: One-on-one
  - Education: Field days
- Results and growers' perceptions on adoption of water-saving technologies

# EXTENSION

What is it and how can we help?

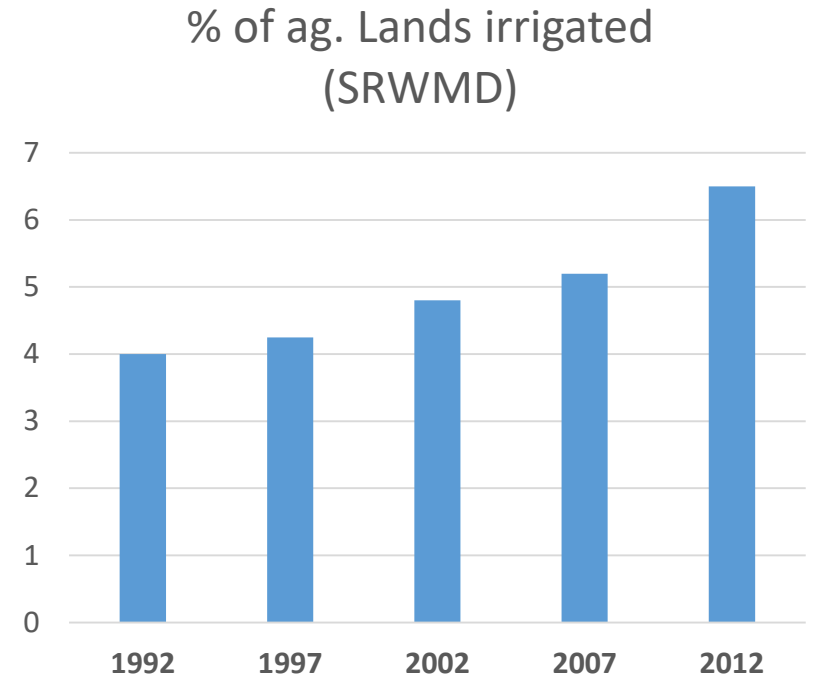
**Extension** is a **partnership between state, federal, and county** governments to provide scientific knowledge and expertise to the public.



# MORE DEMAND, LESS WATER

## What to do?

- 💧 Increasing pressure on water use in agriculture
- 💧 Programs available for grower adoption
- 💧 Tools available to improve water management
- 💧 On-farm demonstrations
- 💧 Growers' trust



SRWMD Trend in % irrigated land 1987-2012  
Florida Statewide Agricultural Irrigation Demand 2016-2040 Agricultural  
Water Demands



# Methods

- 💧 Funding/probes
  - BMP Minigrant (FDACS)
  - NFREC-SV (Bob Hochmuth, Charles Barret)
- 💧 Vendor
  - BMP Logics
- 💧 Equipment/platform
  - All-in-one Sentek probe
  - Irrimax Live
- 💧 Demos
- 💧 Field days - surveys



## Farms – Alachua Co.

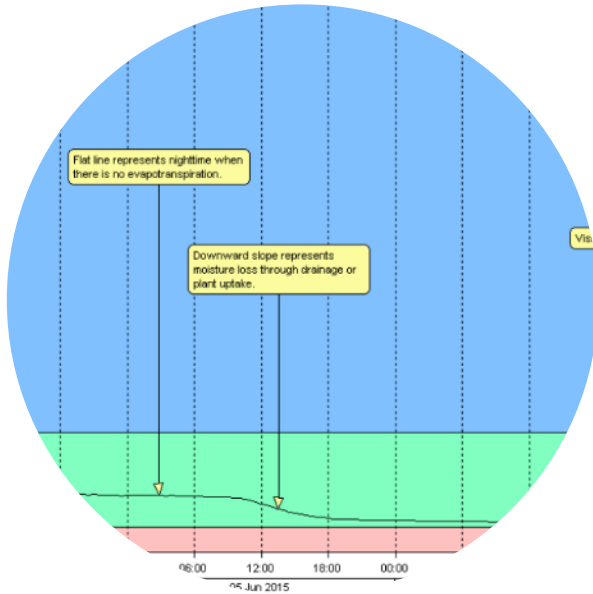
The Family Garden  
Brown's Farm  
Farm to Family  
Rogers' Farm  
Frog Song Organics  
Davis Farm's







# Education: One-on-One



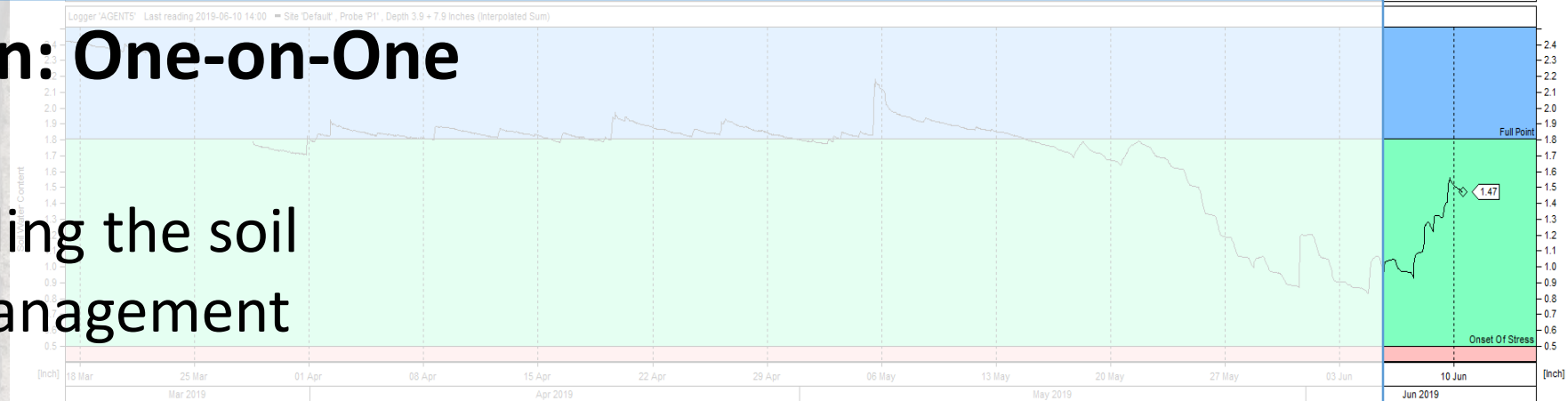
**Data interpretation**  
**Crop management**





# Education: One-on-One

- Understanding the soil
- Nutrient management
- Pest
- Disease
- Data analysis and interpretation





# Education: Field days



**The Family Garden**  
**Brown Farms**



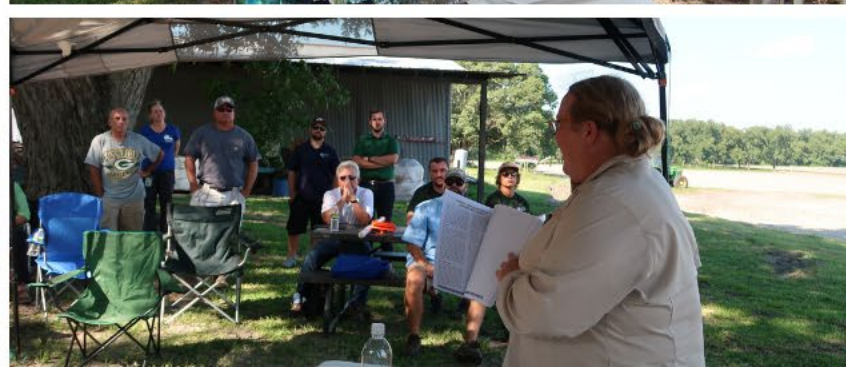














# RESULTS

- 💧 Attendance: 42 participants.
- 💧 Audience: Growers, MGs and, university personnel.
- 💧 Intention to:
  - Adopt SMS (16% n=26 and 57% n=16),
  - Use irrigation scheduling (50%, n=16)
  - Self-evaluate water use (50% n=26, 57% n=16).
- 💧 Knowledge gain: 18% to 36%.



# GROWER'S ADOPTION

- Three growers applied for a cost-share program to acquire the sensors.
- Two were indifferent and one was in disagreement with the adoption of SMS on small, diversified farms.
- Three farmers adjusted their irrigation practices while using the sensors and all of them reported water savings.
- Additional efforts are needed to educate farmers on tools available for water conservation and increase the adoption of best management practices





**Thank  
you**