

VEGETABLE RESEARCH PROJECTS

UMass Research Farm Field Day, August 13, 2003

UMass Research Farm Upgraded Irrigation System

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Funding: Massachusetts Society for Promoting Agriculture, University of Massachusetts Experiment Station and UMass Extension.

Irrigation system improvements have come to the UMass Vegetable and Agronomy Research Farm in South Deerfield. A traveling irrigation gun has been purchased and permanent underground main lines have been installed. The traveling unit will reduce the labor required to apply water to research plots. The use of permanent mains with hydrants allows for quick connection of irrigation systems at any of the plots on the 26-acre farm. Water from the Connecticut River is pumped through four-inch lines to operate the traveling unit. Town water is piped to all locations to supply trickle irrigation. This will allow water to be supplied to plots with the most appropriate system as well to conduct research into specific irrigation methods including application of nutrients.

Primary funding for these upgrades has been made possible through a grant from The Massachusetts Society for Promoting Agriculture, with additional monies from the University of Massachusetts Experiment Station and UMass Extension. Existing components including the pumping and trickle irrigation components were acquired earlier with donations from the New England Vegetable and Berry Growers' Association, equipment dealers and manufacturers. Jim Peeler of Harris Irrigation has installed the new upgrades, and Neil Woodard, Farm Manager, has fine tuned the system to get it working properly.