



# GROWING SMARTER

News & Information To Help You Grow

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June 2014  
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## Ongoing Drought Leads To Alternative Irrigation Strategies

Fertizona helps growers to optimize benefits of conservation efforts with drip irrigation system

Water challenges are nothing new to Southwestern farmers and ranchers, but they're getting worse. By some measurements, Arizona is in the 14th year of a significant drought. In April, it was reported that 57% of the state is now in "severe" or "extreme" drought conditions, with 100% being "abnormally dry."

The U.S. Department of the Interior says if shortages continue, new rules in 2017 could reduce Arizona's rights to Colorado River water, which would have a major impact on agricultural production. A report from the Arizona Department of Water Resources addressed a widening gap between available resources and projected future needs, and recommended three solutions to achieve a workable balance: increase the supply of water, reduce demand and improve usage efficiency.

### Irrigating with less

Agriculture has always been at the forefront of water stewardship, and new technology continues to improve how irrigation can be used more carefully.

One perfect example is "drip" irrigation systems, which are much more efficient than conventional sprinklers or flood irrigating. With drip irrigation, water is delivered in small, uniform amounts directly to plants through low-pressure emitting devices attached to a network of pipes or tubes, typically on the soil surface or beneath it. A common term for an underground system is SSDI (subsurface drip irrigation).

*Story continued on page 2*

## Stewards of the Land

We've seen longer, hotter days this past year in Arizona, mixed with a near record lack of rainfall in most growing parts of the state. Water conservation has long been a buzzword amongst the mainstream media, but the stories – and predictions – are getting more dire.

Like most springs, they're all different. And this spring is no different, we've had rail car shortages in the North, colder

temperatures in the Midwest and East as well as drought in California and the Southwest. But as a grower in the Southwest, chances are you've seen this all before. In fact, in our first 35 years, the team at Fertizona has seen conditions just like these, but somehow – somehow – the growers keep growing.

### So what do we know that others don't?

Just check out the story in this month's edition about David Wuertz and his operation's Subsurface Drip Irrigation, or SSDI (page 1). Water conservation or appropriate use of water resources – is something that Arizona growers have specialized in for more than 100 years.

And as the state's crop mix has grown and changed, both in response to environmental and economic concerns, one thing remains the same – the “can-do” attitude of our growers.

So that's what makes David's story so interesting, and one worth telling. Necessity is the mother of invention, and as David points out you can maximize the impact of each and every drop by integrating something as simple as a drip irrigation system. More crop with each drop.

Stewardship of the land is what it's all about, and is something each of our growers practice. And we've been working, hand-in-hand with our growers to make sure they have the products and expertise to make the right decisions for their land. From the tried-and-true to the new and emerging, we've got the product mix you need.

There are no easy answers, but at the end of the day, we're committed to being here, working alongside each and every one of our growers to find the right solutions to whatever problems are thrown at us.

We've done it for the past 35 years, and we're going to be here for the next 35.

– Jim Compton

President, Fertizona and Compton Ag Services



Story continued from cover

## Ongoing Drought Leads To Alternative Irrigation Strategies

There are many obvious advantages to SSDI. By irrigating below the ground, you don't lose water to wind or surface runoff, and you don't wet non-target areas. A drip system also lets you irrigate efficiently on odd-shaped fields. You can also integrate a full variety of other products, including fumigants, fungicides, insecticides, etc. into your system, saving time and money.

### More crop per drop

Because SSDI distributes water directly to plants where they need it most, growers can maximize yield potential with less irrigation. A drip system even improves the performance of your liquid fertilizers and chemicals because they reach the root zone more completely.

David Wuertz is a pioneer in drip irrigation, both as a supplier and a grower. His family's company has provided SSDI equipment and services since 1980, and he also uses extensive drip irrigation on their many acres of cotton, alfalfa and other crops.

“With the water shortages we face in the Southwest, you almost have to use drip irrigation in order to survive,” Wuertz says. “It's the best way to go for both water savings and yields.”

His own Sundance Farms is a great example. When the Wuertzes converted cotton fields to subsurface drip irrigation, water use was almost cut in half.

“The drip system usually takes about three to three-and-a-half acre-feet of water,” Wuertz says, “compared to the six feet needed for furrow or flood irrigation.” The Wuertzes also reported increased cotton yield with the drip system.

Shawn Wright, Manager, Fertizona – Thatcher, works with a number of growers who have installed drip irrigation on cotton.

“I know the drought was totally a factor for one of my customers who recently installed a drip system,” Wright says. “He decided to switch after seeing other growers having tremendous success with it.”

### Support from Fertizona

If you're considering drip irrigation, count on Fertizona for the products and support you need for fertigation and chemigation. We offer many liquid fertilizers, pesticides and surfactants designed for use in drip systems, all to help you promote top yields with less water, and speed up your ROI.

“There's a learning curve with drip, but Fertizona can help at every step of the way,” adds Wright. “And in the long run, it's better for everybody.”

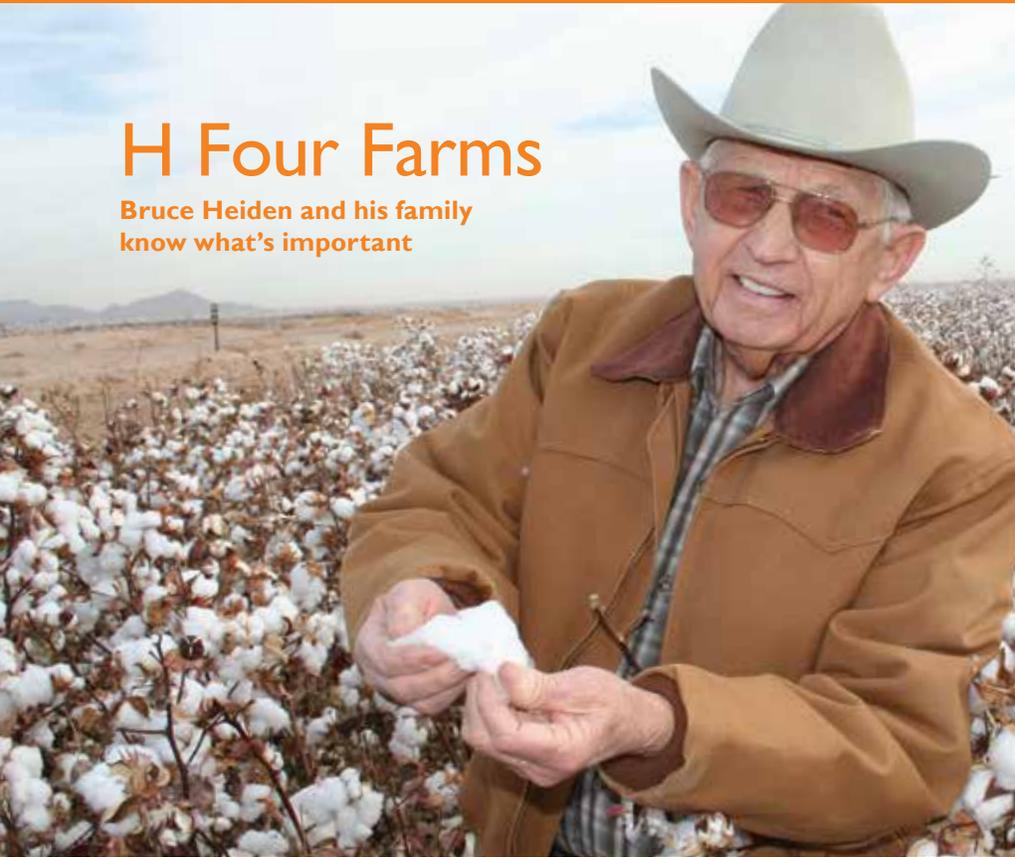
***For more information about drip irrigation systems or products, please contact your Fertizona location or representative.***



David Wuertz, right, and his father Howard Wuertz of Sundance Farms

# H Four Farms

**Bruce Heiden and his family know what's important**



## Bruce Heiden honored as Hall of Famer

Earlier this spring, Bruce was inducted into the Arizona Farming & Ranching Hall of Fame. Each year a panel of industry professionals names a new slate of honorees for the Hall, and Heiden was among the group selected for the 2014 class.

Members are chosen in recognition of their consistent and noteworthy contributions in the realms of Arizona agriculture and agribusiness, or related science and education. Heiden was honored by his peers for having such a distinguished record of business success, respect for the land and family history.

The honor is well-deserved, and we congratulate Bruce for his impressive achievements!

Some men's success in life is measured by their professional achievements, while others take more pride in raising an exceptional family. Bruce Heiden has had the pleasure of achieving both.

Heiden is the patriarch of H Four Farms in Buckeye, Arizona. It's a thriving, multi-faceted operation which now represents four generations. The Heiden family got its start here when Bruce's father moved to Arizona in 1932, following doctor's orders.

"He lived in Massachusetts and had asthma," Heiden explains, "so he came out here for his health. Then he started farming in 1943, and I joined him as soon as I finished high school."

In those early days, the Heidens' main crop was cotton, and it's still a big part of the farm's production. The family even owns and manages its own cotton gin in Gila Bend.

"Cotton was our backbone product for years," Heiden says, "but now alfalfa is the largest part of our crop mix." In addition to alfalfa and cotton,

H Four grows wheat, corn and barley, all totaling about 7500 acres.

The farm has been a pioneer of diversification for a long time. The Heidens got into the cattle feeding business in the late 1950s, and the family still owns and operates a feedlot in Buckeye. They also provide processed corn to local dairies.

### Committed to family ties

Bruce and his wife Helen have been married for more than 60 years, and they have four children: sons Art, Les and Hal, and a daughter, Holly. All three Heiden sons are involved in the family business operations with their father – a fact which shows in the name "H Four." (Of course, "4H" is taken.) Bruce and Helen also have 12 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren, and two of their grandsons are currently working on the farm.

"It's been great to raise a family here," Heiden says with obvious affection. "It took a lot of hard work, but I wouldn't trade it for anything."

### A history with Fertizona

H Four is a loyal customer of Fertizona, and has been for many years – in fact, since before it even existed.

"I was getting fertilizer from Jimmy Compton's dad when Fertizona wasn't around yet," Heiden recalls. "So we've worked with the company from the time it started." Today, the Fertizona – Buckeye location supplies H Four with fertilizer, seed, chemicals and more.

"We could call them 'forever' customers," adds Tim Walsh, Manager, Fertizona – Buckeye, "because they were here at the beginning. The Heidens are an outstanding family and we've had an excellent relationship with them."

"We depend on Fertizona for a lot of quality products, and they even help us with record keeping," Heiden says. "They're great to do business with."

# Understanding New Crop Insurance

Growers face different options with 2014 Farm Bill

Given the unpredictable nature of farming in the Southwest, smart growers here agree that crop insurance is a good idea. But what exactly does that mean? There are countless types of insurance policies and options, and the situation is now getting even more complicated.

“The new Farm Bill is a game changer,” says Gary McKenzie, president of FARM, Inc., an Arizona firm specializing in crop insurance and agricultural financial management. “Farmers used to have a lot more government-supported safety nets, but with the new bill, now there’s more responsibility for a grower to find his own insurance.”

“With all the new stuff in the Farm Bill, some of our customers are trying to figure out what to do (about insurance),” agrees Lamont Lacy, Credit Manager – Fertilzona. “There are still lots of good options available. Growers just need to talk to their agent.”

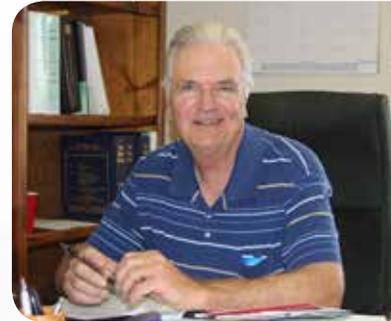
The choices include insurance through private companies as well as government-subsidized programs. The trick is to work with a knowledgeable, reputable provider who can walk you through the process to explain the most suitable and cost-effective policies.

“For example, growers can get multi-peril insurance with a level of protection they choose, based on their yield history,” says McKenzie, “but the program rules can be different by crop and by county.”

Those rules include deadlines for both sign-up and planting. An important case in point is June 1st, the cut-off date for planting cotton in most counties in Arizona if you want it to qualify for insurance.

“There’s definitely some confusion and misunderstanding out there,” adds McKenzie. “We want to make sure growers are up to speed so they can be on top of things.”

***If you have questions or need advice about crop insurance, talk to your local Fertilzona or Compton Ag rep, or contact Lamont Lacy at 520.836.7477.***



Lamont Lacy

**“We want to make sure growers are up to speed.”**

– Gary McKenzie, President, FARM, Inc. Insurance

## Larry McGee retires

Long-time Fertilzona employee Larry McGee announced his retirement earlier this year, and everyone at the company wants to wish him well. Larry joined Fertilzona in 2002 and spent a number of years as our Fertilizer Blending and Bagging Manager.

“Larry was a familiar presence at Fertilzona for a long time,” says Tyrell Currie, Marketing Director, “and we really appreciate all of his contributions and years of faithful service.”

Tyke Bennett has taken over Larry’s duties at Fertilzona and can be contacted at 520.518.0196 with any bagging inquiries.

Congratulations, Larry. We’ll miss you!

## Location change gives Fertilzona customers new options

Growers who have been served out of the Fertilzona – Santan location should be assured that they won’t miss a beat. The Santan facility in Sacaton, AZ was recently consolidated into Fertilzona’s Casa Grande office, and all products and services will be readily available as part of this seamless transition.

All business has been transferred to our Casa Grande location, and the representatives there are ready to work with you for all ordering, consultation and deliveries. For more information, please contact Fertilzona – Casa Grande at 520.836.7477.



CYC Seed Company seed coating machine.

## New coated ryegrass seed lowers cost of overseeding

Unique Fertizona product means thick fall turf for less

With higher-than-ever prices for ryegrass seed, how can you avoid that expense and still have healthy, green turf all year? One smart alternative is economical Desert Gold® coated ryegrass seed from Fertizona.

Fertizona and the CYC Seed Company have worked with Mountain View Seeds to develop a premium coated seed which costs much less than conventional ryegrass. Desert Gold seed combines calcium carbonate and an exclusive micronutrient blend inside a permeable polymer coating. The coated seed holds moisture better to increase seedling survival rate and germination, so fewer seeds are needed per acre. The seed is also colored red to improve application efficiency, making it easier to avoid skips or overlaps.

“This is the future, because rye seed is going to stay high,” says Nick Lubich, Turf Management Specialist, Fertizona – Fennemore. “We introduced Desert Gold last year and saw very good results, with accelerated germination and quick establishment of solid turf.”

One satisfied customer is Reid Scholes, Golf Course Superintendent of Moon Valley Country Club in Phoenix. He arranged to have Desert Gold seed applied at the Tres Rios Golf Course at Estrella Mountain Park in Goodyear, another facility he oversees.

“Price was my main motivation,” explains Scholes. “We decided to give it a shot, and the coated seed really worked for us. We hope to use it again.”



### DESERT GOLD®

The Tres Rios Golf Club proudly uses Desert Gold coated ryegrass seed.

“The grass was thicker (with the coated seed) and had better germination,” adds Rob Stottern, Superintendent at Tres Rios. “We had a lot more density. And it’s fantastic when you apply it, because you can see right where the seed was thrown.”

Scholes also did a side-by-side test on a driving range, with Desert Gold at a lower rate applied next to more expensive seed. “The turf from the coated seed looked just as good,” he says.

***For more information about economical coated ryegrass seed, please contact your Fertizona representative or Craig Allen, Branch Manager, Fertizona – Fennemore at 602.402.3371.***

# Pistachio update

Mild winter encourages promising yields

This year's crop of pistachios in Arizona comes with both good news and bad news. First, the mild winter has given things an early start, which generally indicates a step toward higher yields.

"This past January and February were some of the warmest in history, so the trees are ahead of schedule," says PCA Steve Fenn, Fertizona – Willcox. "But that also means we could see more insect pressure."

Another new challenge Fenn has encountered with some of his customers this spring is the pycnidial fungus identified as *Phoma fungicola*. The phoma pathogen, first discovered in Arizona in late 2012, has been known to attack pistachio hulls and nuts.

"Fertizona has several fungicides to treat phoma," Fenn says, "but growers need to identify the disease first so they can choose the right solution."

One grower whose crop hasn't been affected by the phoma threat is Mark Cook of Bowie, Arizona. "We've learned that we can't be complacent, so we maintain a significant fungicide program," Cook says. "I know that phoma has definitely been a problem for some people, but we're very aggressive with our fungicides."

Cook agrees that the unusually mild winter affected how some trees came out of dormancy, but he also notes that his family has been growing pistachios for more than 40 years.

"It's nothing we haven't seen before," he adds confidently. "We'll be alright, and it looks like it's going to be a good year."

***For more information about fungicides or other products for nut crops, please contact your Fertizona location or representative.***

**"We're very aggressive with our fungicides."**

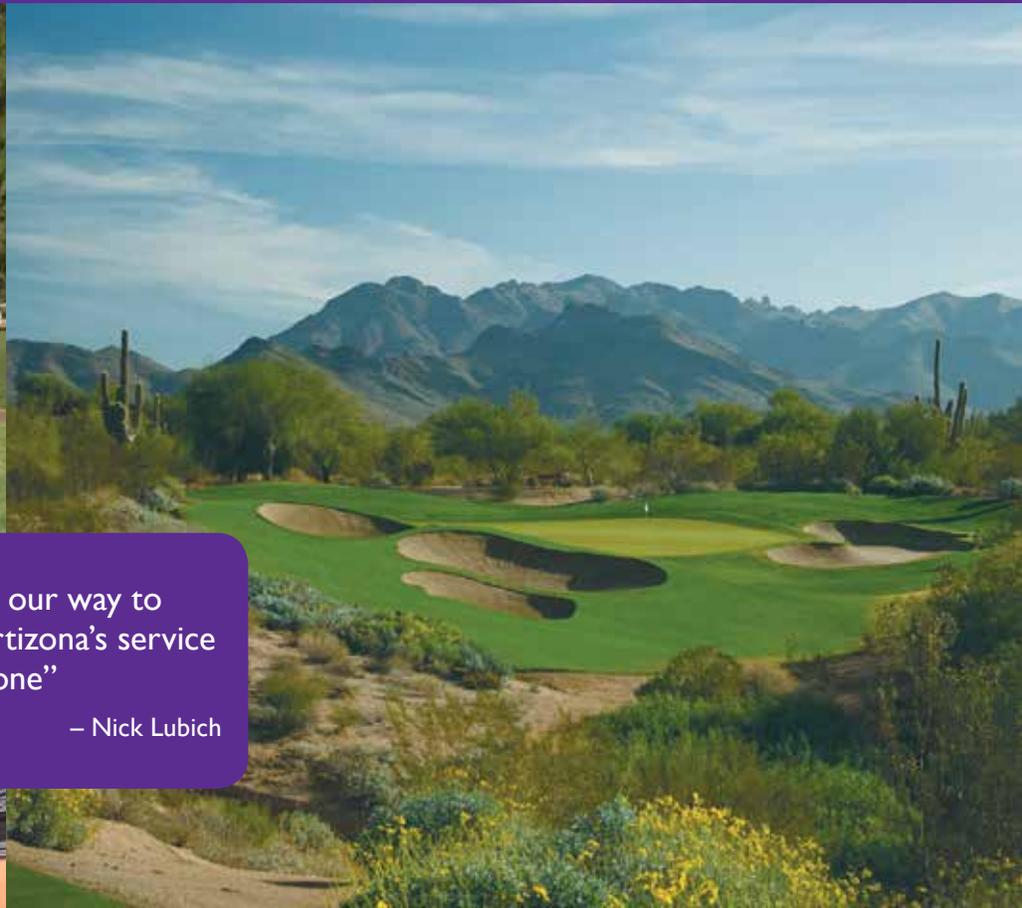
– Mark Cook, Bowie, Arizona





“We go out of our way to assure that Fertizona’s service is second to none”

– Nick Lubich



## Driving golf farther

**Nick Lubich is making a difference in turf**

Nick Lubich, Turf Management Specialist, Fertizona – Fennemore, is a perfect example of someone being in the right place at the right time.

Originally from Ohio, Lubich was living in Florida when his company transferred him to Phoenix 10 years ago. Through some lucky coincidences, he was invited to join Fertizona and decided to make a career switch.

“Back then, Fertizona was just starting to grow their turf business and getting known in the golf market,” Lubich explains. “The golf business is my passion, and I really liked the Fertizona people I met, so the move seemed like a great fit.”

It turned out to be a smart move for a lot of people. Fertizona’s golf business has been growing aggressively for

several years, and the addition of Lubich helps to further the company’s reputation as a leader in the regional turf market.

“We go out of our way to assure that Fertizona’s service is second to none,” Lubich says with pride. “We try to fill customer orders the same day or the following day, while some other suppliers’ deliveries are a week out.”

Lubich currently serves about 70 golf course clients in the Phoenix and Tucson areas, including several golf management companies. He provides them with a variety of fertilizers, chemicals and seed products, along with the benefits of his knowledge and experience.

In his spare time, Nick and his wife Diana like movies, hiking and hanging

out together. Nick also enjoys hockey – which he still plays and coaches a youth team – and not surprisingly, golf.

“People say it must be nice getting to spend time on golf courses every day, and they’re right,” Lubich adds. “I have a great job with a one-of-a-kind company that really cares about its customers and employees. My seven years at Fertizona have been absolutely great, and I look forward to keep growing our business.”



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## LOCATIONS

Contact Your Local Office For All Your Growing Needs

### CASA GRANDE

#### Main Office

2850 South Peart Road  
Casa Grande, AZ 85193  
(520) 836-7477

Dennis Osborn, *Crop Protection*

Tyke Bennett, *Seed Products and  
Fertilizer Bagging*

Jimmy Compton, *Crop Nutrition*

Lamont Lacy, *Credit Manager*

Jeffrey Bengé, *Controller*

### BUCKEYE

26705 West Baseline Road  
Buckeye, AZ 85326  
(623) 386-4491

Tim Walsh, *Manager*

### FENNEMORE

17102 West Olive Avenue  
Waddell, AZ 85355  
(623) 935-4252

Craig Allen, *Manager*

### ROLL

4212 South Avenue 39E  
Roll, AZ 85347  
(928) 785-9016

Doug Canan, *Manager*

### THATCHER

4257 US Highway 70  
Thatcher, AZ 85552  
(928) 428-3161

Shawn Wright, *Manager*

### WILLCOX

512 East Maley Street  
Willcox, AZ 85643  
(520) 384-2264

Tim Hudson, *Manager*

### YUMA

4290 East County 10½ Street  
Yuma, AZ 85365  
(928) 344-9806

Mike Espil, *Manager*

### FERTIZONA DE MEXICO

Blvd. Enrique Mazón Lopez esquina con  
Calle Rogelio Villanueva Varela SN  
Colonia La Victoria  
Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico 83304

Casey Compton (U.S.)  
(520) 510-5054

Gilberto Gil (Mexico)  
011-52 (662) 280-0121

### COMPTON AG SERVICES

19751 South Defrain Boulevard  
Blythe, CA 92225  
(760) 922-3117

Tim Walsh, *Manager*

### AG EXPRESS

15472 West Jimmie Kerr Boulevard  
Casa Grande, AZ 85122  
(520) 876-9982

Dave Barrett, *Manager*

### CYC SEED COMPANY

3085 North Cessna Way  
Casa Grande, AZ 85122  
(520) 316-3738

Casey Compton, *Manager*

Send address changes to:

Tyrell Currie  
2850 South Peart Road  
Casa Grande, AZ 85193-9024  
tcurrie@fertizona.com



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