



Wheat Farming Conserves Critical California Water

“ We get a lot of criticism for using irrigation water from the Colorado River. But if you want to sustain a growing world population with food and fiber, you have to modify the environment to satisfy those needs. ”

**Roy Motter, California
Desert Durum® Wheat Farmer**

Growing quality wheat as a part of his diversified farm operation, Roy Motter is able to manage water as efficiently as possible. His 2,500 acre farm in California's Imperial Valley may seem small compared to wheat farms around the nation, but Spruce Farms LLC, where Roy is managing partner, supports three families. Roy farms Desert Durum® wheat, lettuce, cabbage, onions, sugar beets, sugar cane, alfalfa seed and hay, Sudan grass, melons and tomatoes. Wheat is a vital crop to the operation, as it provides diversification. By rotating growing wheat and lettuce Roy conserves important soil nutrients, reduces his need for pesticides and helps the farm preserve precious water resources.



WATER CONSERVATION

Over the past 30 years, growers in the desert Southwest have reduced water usage for barley and wheat by about 30%.



FARMERS INVEST IN SUSTAINABILITY

According to the 2013 NASS Farm and Ranch Irrigation Survey, farmers in California spent \$135,555,755 on water conservation and \$44,876,415 on energy conservation.

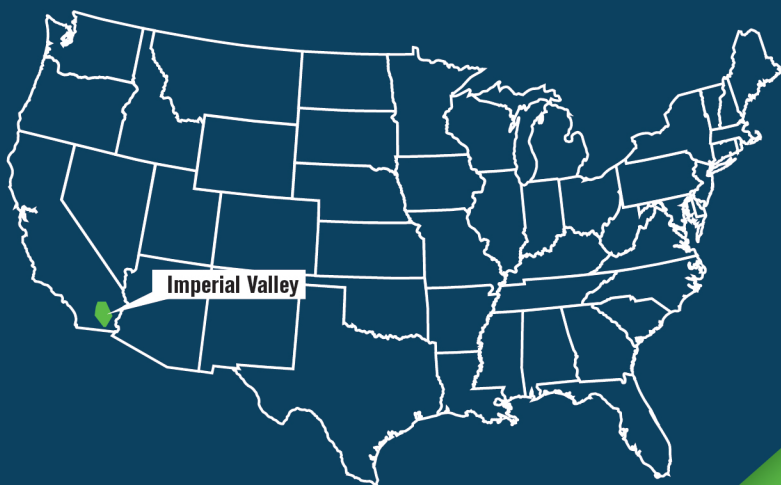


WHEAT INCREASES PRODUCTIVITY

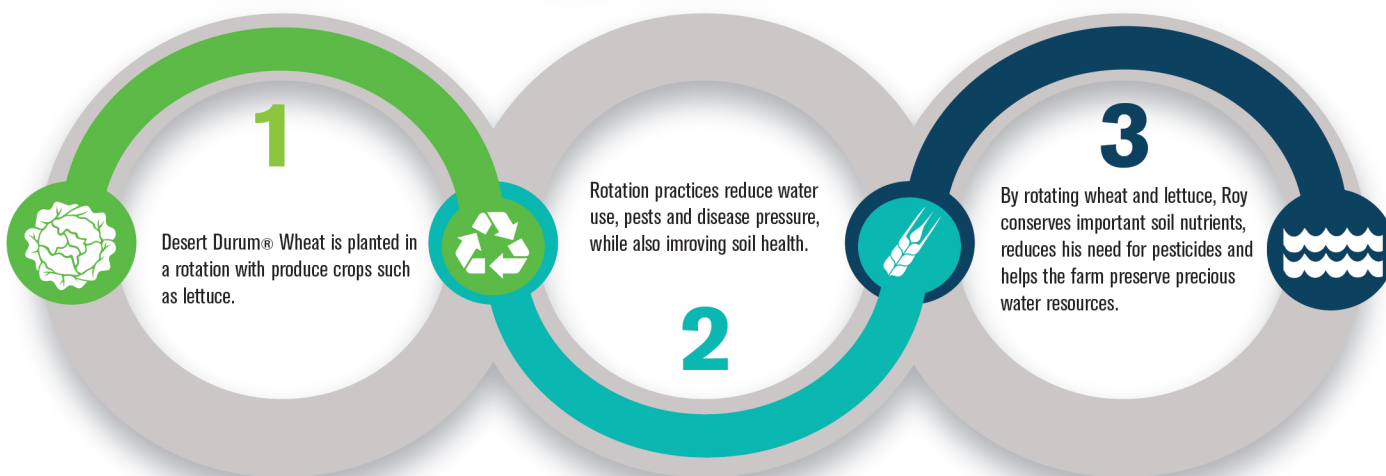
Compared to growing a single crop, wheat-vegetable rotations increase economic water productivity (the dollar value of crop production per acre-foot of water consumed) by 9 to 21 times.

85%

The Imperial Valley supports 85% of the nation's lettuce production in the winter months of the year. The lack of rainfall in this arid climate requires farmers to use water as efficiently as possible. Roy uses wheat as a rotational crop to let the soil rest in between vegetable crops and control weeds and disease. Growing wheat with lettuce reduces water use on his farm by 24 to 56%.



“ We can't grow our money crops – lettuce, onions, and sugar beets year after year. You have to have a rotation, and wheat is a good rotational crop for us. It lets us control weeds and diseases that affect the other crops and gives the ground a chance to rest. ”



U.S. Wheat Associates (USW) is the industry's market development organization working in more than 100 countries. Its activities are made possible by producer checkoff dollars managed by 19 state wheat commissions and through cost-share funding provided by USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service.

