

# Nickels Soil Laboratory: New Irrigation Well to Offset Reduced Water Supply

## Project Leader: Mike Murray

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## PROJECT SUMMARY

### Objectives:

- Secure a dependable, sufficient, and long-term source of irrigation water to protect the viability of almond research projects at the Nickel's Soil Lab.

### Background:

Traditionally, this 200-acre research facility has relied on water allocations determined and made by the local federal irrigation water district and delivered by way of the Tehama Colusa Canal.

In recent years, though, these allocations have been severely curtailed. Such restrictions have continued to pose a serious threat to the Nickels Soil Lab's 15 ongoing research projects, and

related activities.

The uncertainty about how much allocated water can be expected has been compounded by the lab's lack of alternative water sources, plus its not being able to install an onsite well.

### Discussion:

The solution to this problem was to find a way to provide the lab with its own irrigation well. It was found in the form of industry support and funding from the Almond Board of California.

Installed in the lab's Marine Road orchard, the well was completed in time for the peak 2009 irrigation season. It can deliver about 1,000 gallons of water a minute, and thereby gives the lab a measure of independence from the federal water and a more secure supply.

**Project Cooperator:** John Edstrom, University of California Cooperative Extension, Colusa County

### For More Details, Visit

- 2009-10 Annual Report CD (09-HORT12-Murray); or on the web (after January 2011) at [AlmondBoard.com/ResearchReports](http://AlmondBoard.com/ResearchReports)